Three sentenced

Three guilty in killing of Ahmaud Arbery sentenced to life in prison. **News, Page 4**

Sidney Poitier dies

First Black actor to win Academy Award for lead performance dies at 94. **News, Page 5**

Unemployment rate falls

U.S. unemployment rate fell to a pandemic-low 3.9% last month. **News, Page 6**

Clear and cold

Sunny and very chilly; high of 30. **Sports, Page 8**

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CORONAVIRUS IN CONNECTICUT

Weekly positive test rate near 23%

Hartford HealthCare adding testing sites

By Eliza Fawcett
Hartford Courant

Connecticut's weekly COVID-19 test positivity rate and number of hospitalizations due to the virus continued to rise on Friday, reaching their highest points since the early months of the pandemic.

"Not just in [Hartford HealthCare] but in the state we are seeing a rise in cases as well as hospitalizations, as well as ICU and ventilator utilization," Dr. Ulysses Wu, an infectious disease specialist at Hartford HealthCare, said Friday. "We still hope that our prediction of the middle of January when all this will start to decrease holds true."

The state's weekly COVID-19 test positivity rate increased slightly on Friday to 22.69%, a record high since widespread testing began more than 18 months ago. Even so, over the past week, the rate of change for the metric has begun to slow somewhat, signaling a potential flattening.

In a push to expand the state's testing capacity as COVID-19 caseloads remain high, Hartford HealthCare is opening a few new testing sites, hospital officials announced Friday.

"As everyone is aware, testing has become essential and limited and we're excited to be able to start opening up these additional sites," said Jim Cardon, Hartford HealthCare's chief clinical integration officer, during a press conference Friday.

In addition to the health system's preexisting testing sites in Newington, New Britain and Torrington, a testing site opened at St. Vincent's Medical Center in Bridgeport on Friday. Two additional testing sites, at Backus Hospital in Norwich and Windham Hospital in Willimantic, will open Wednesday. All locations require appointments and do not accept walk-ins.

The additional sites will increase the health system's testing capacity by roughly 1,000 tests per day, Cardon said.

The new sites are poised to help

Turn to Virus, *Page 2*



"The good thing is that the snow is light," said Jane Moynihan while shoveling her front yard in Mansfield and playing with her dog Charlie in more than a foot of snow that fell in the area Friday morning. **MARK MIRKO/HARTFORD COURANT**

BAND OF SNOW 'JUST CRASHED'

Storm defies expectations, dumps more than a foot in parts of state

By Christine Dempsey | Hartford Courant

The first winter storm of 2022 dropped a foot of snow in eastern Connecticut, causing schools and day care centers across the state to close and making for a hazardous morning commute.

Snow was falling at a rate of 2 inches an hour early Friday, said Gary Lessor, chief meteorologist with the Connecticut Weather Center at Western Connecticut State University. It stopped snowing before noon.

Most towns got 3-8 inches. But by mid-morning, 13 inches had fallen in the Danielson section of Killingly; 12.5 inches had dropped in the Higganum section of Haddam and Hebron and Pomfret got a foot. Colchester got 11 inches, Lessor said Friday morning.

A band of snow that sliced diagonally across the state, roughly along the I-84 corridor, was partly responsible

Turn to Snow, *Page 3*



Snow covers a barn roof and branches in the Terryville section of Plymouth on Friday. **JESSE LEAVENWORTH/HARTFORD COURANT**

SPORTS GAMBLING

'We want to make it a place to be'

What would proposed wagering venue at XL Center look like?

By Kenneth R. Gosselin
Hartford Courant

HARTFORD — Sports betting could come to Hartford's XL Center this fall in a proposal that would carve out a drab section of the arena facing Ann Uccello Street and replace it with a venue tricked out for wagering, combined with a bar and a restaurant.

The venue could cost up to $4 million and would be open to both event ticket holders and patrons walking in off the street. The sportsbook would include wagering kiosks and counters, boards displaying betting odds and a bank of televisions broadcasting sporting events, all with a view of the arena floor.

The arena's now, bunker-like appearance from the street along Ann Uccello would be transformed with a sportsbook built out toward the sidewalk over loading dock ramps and enclosed in glass, raising its visibility.

"We want to make it a place to be," said Michael W. Freimuth, executive director of the Capital Region Development Authority, the quasi-public agency that oversees the arena's operations. "We want it to be an attraction in and of itself. And we want it to be a place that people know they can go any time of the day or year, and not just when there are events."

Freimuth said he hopes the project will get on the fast track and be ready for the thick of the football season this fall. The proposal must still be approved by CRDA's board of directors.

The sportsbook would overlook the Allyn Street corridor running between the rear of the arena and Union Station. Over the last decade, 250 apartments have been added to the area at a

Turn to Betting, *Page 3*

CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

Schools scramble to find subs

Hundreds of teachers absent in New Haven

By Michael Melia
Associated Press

Principals, superintendents and counselors are filling in as substitutes in classrooms as the surge in coronavirus infections further strains schools that already had been struggling with staffing shortages.

In New Haven, where hundreds of teachers have been out each day this week, administrators have helped to cover classrooms. When her classroom aide did not show up for work Wednesday, special education teacher Jennifer Graves borrowed paraprofessionals from other classrooms for short stretches to get through the day at Dr. Reginald Mayo Early Childhood School — an arrangement that was difficult and confusing for her young students with disabilities.

"It's very difficult to get through my lesson plans when somebody doesn't know your students, when somebody is not used to working with students with disabilities," Graves said. "Some students need sensory inputs, some students need to be spoon-fed. So it's very hard to train someone on the spot."

In a school year when teachers are being asked to help students recover from the pandemic, some say they are dealing with overwhelming stress just trying to keep classes running.

"I had a friend say to me, 'You know, three weeks ago we were locking our doors because of school shootings again, and now we're opening the window for COVID.' It's really all a bit too much," said Meghan Hatch-Geary,

Turn to Teachers, *Page 2*



At Laurel Hill Elementary School in Hanover Park, Illinois, music teacher Lynne Schefke, who normally works at Huff Elementary School in Elgin, Illinois, high-fives Angel Herrera in a dual-language kindergarten classroom while working as a substitute Tuesday. **TERRENCE ANTONIO JAMES/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

Hockey player dies after collision in high school game

A St. Luke's boys hockey player died after suffering an injury to his neck during a junior varsity game at the Brunswick School in Greenwich on Thursday afternoon, according to Greenwich police and school officials. **Connecticut, Page 1**

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FROM PAGE ONE

Virus

from Page 1

offset the loss of testing sites run by SEMA4, the Stamford-based laboratory which supplies more than half of the state's testing capacity and which is ending its contract with Connecticut at the end of the month.

Cases, positivity rate

Connecticut reported 10,076 new COVID-19 cases Friday out of 41,038 tests administered, for a daily positivity rate of 24.55%. The state's seven-day positivity rate now stands at 22.69%, the highest of any time since widespread testing began more than 18 months ago.

All eight Connecticut counties — along with nearly the rest of the country — are currently recording "high" levels of COVID-19 transmission as defined by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. With this level of transmission, the CDC advises people to wear a mask in public indoor settings.

Hospitalizations

As of Friday, Connecticut had 1,810 patients hospitalized with COVID-19, an increase of 26 individuals since Thursday and the most the state has seen since April 25, 2020.

According to the state, 67.3% of people hospitalized with COVID-19 are not fully vaccinated. Hospital officials say the rate is significantly higher when considering only patients with severe symptoms.

Deaths

On Thursday, the state reported 121 coronavirus-linked deaths over the past week, the most in a seven-day period in nearly a year. Connecticut has now recorded 9,281 COVID-19 deaths during the pandemic. The state reports additional COVID-19 deaths once a week.

The United States has recorded a total of 834,146 COVID-19 deaths, according to the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University.

Vaccinations

As of Friday, 89.6% of all Connecticut residents and 95% of those 12 and older had received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, while 75% of all residents and 83.9% of those 12 and older were fully vaccinated, according to the CDC.

Additionally, about 44.5% of fully vaccinated Connecticut residents 18 or older have received a booster dose.

The CDC warns that booster shots are sometimes misclassified as first doses, likely inflating the reported number of first-dose coverage and understating the true number of people who have received boosters.

Eliza Fawcett can be reached at elfawcett@courant.com.



Cars line up this week to receive at-home COVID-19 test kits from a distribution for Mansfield residents at Mansfield Middle School. **MARK MIRKO/HARTFORD COURANT**

Teachers

from Page 1

an English teacher at Woodland Regional High School in Beacon Falls. "This year, trying to fix everything, trying to be everything for everyone, is more and more exhausting all the time."

In Cincinnati, dozens of employees from the central office were dispatched this week to schools that were at risk of having to close because of low staffing. The superintendent of Boston schools, Brenda Cassellius, tweeted she was filling in for a fifth grade teacher.

San Francisco's superintendent, Vince Matthews, has called on all employees with teaching credentials to take a class.

"This is the most challenging time in my 36 years as an educator," Matthews said Thursday during a break from filling in as a substitute sixth grade science teacher. "We're trying to educate students in the middle of a pandemic while the sands around us are consistently shifting."

Staff absences and the surge driven by the omicron variant have led some big districts including Atlanta, Detroit and Milwaukee to switch temporarily to virtual learning. Where schools are holding the line on in-person learning, getting through the day has required an all-hands-on-deck approach.

"It's absolutely exhausting," said history teacher Deborah Schmidt, who was covering other classes during her planning period at McKinley Classical Leadership Academy in St. Louis. On Thursday, she was covering a physics class.

Labor tensions have been highest in Chicago, where classes were canceled after the teachers union voted to refuse in-person instruction, but union leaders in many school systems have been clamoring for more flexibility on virtual learning, additional testing and other protections against the virus.

Even before infection rates took off around the holidays, many districts were struggling to keep up staffing levels, particularly among substitutes and other lower-paid positions. As a result, teachers have been spread thin for months, said Becky Pringle, president of the National Education Association.

"All of these additional burdens and stresses on top of being worried about getting sick, on top of being stressed like all of us are to after a two-year pandemic ... it just compounded to put us in a place that we are now," Pringle said in an interview.

Some administrators have already been helping for months in classrooms and cafeterias to fill in for sick and quarantining staff.

"We're not in love with the circumstances, but we're happy to do the work because the work is making sure that we're here for our kids," said Mike Cornell, superintendent of the Hamburg Central School District in New York, who spent time this fall on cafeteria duty poking straws into juice pouches and peeling lids off chips to fill staffing gaps.

In San Francisco, 600 of the district's 3,600 teachers were out Thursday. Even with administrators, curriculum developers and teacher coaches filling in, there were not enough substitutes to cover all classrooms and some classes needed to be combined, said Matthews, the superintendent.

Among the schools that went virtual this week because of staffing shortages was second grade teacher Anna Tarka-DiNunzio's school of roughly 200 students in Pittsburgh. Some taught their students despite being sick with the virus, said Tarka-DiNunzio, who was disappointed to hear some characterize staffing shortages as the result of teachers arbitrarily taking off work.

"It's not just people calling off. It's people who are sick or who have family members who are sick," she said.

The strains on schools this week might have been even tougher if not for large numbers of students being absent themselves. In New Haven, teachers say classes have been only about half full.

Jonathan Berryman, a music teacher, said some of his students haven't shown up for weeks. He worries what that will mean for the performance targets set for students and their teachers.

"Before omicron came along, there was fairly smooth sailing. Now the ship has been rocked," he said. "We get to make midyear adjustments in our evaluation system. And some I'm sure are wondering whether we should even be concerned about that academic progress piece."

Graves, who is in her 12th year of teaching in New Haven, said that she is grateful for administrators who have been helping out in classrooms and the aides who have pitched in, but that her students have struggled with the lack of consistency in staffing.

She also has been frustrated with quickly changing health protocols, and worried about the health of herself and her extended family. Most of her young students are not able to tolerate wearing masks for long stretches, and many have been coughing lately.

"This is the hardest year I've had," she said.

Contributing to this report were Associated Press writers Jocelyn Gecker in San Francisco, Carolyn Thompson in Buffalo, New York, Kantele Franko in Columbus, Ohio, and Heather Hollingsworth in Mission, Kansas.

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LOTTERY
Friday, Jan. 7

PLAY3 DAY
6 3 8 **WB:** 4

PLAY4 DAY
5 4 9 4 **WB:** 6

The late lotto numbers were not drawn in time for this edition. For results, please visit courant.com/lottery.

THURSDAY'S LATE NUMBERS

PLAY3 NIGHT
0 5 9 **WB:** 5

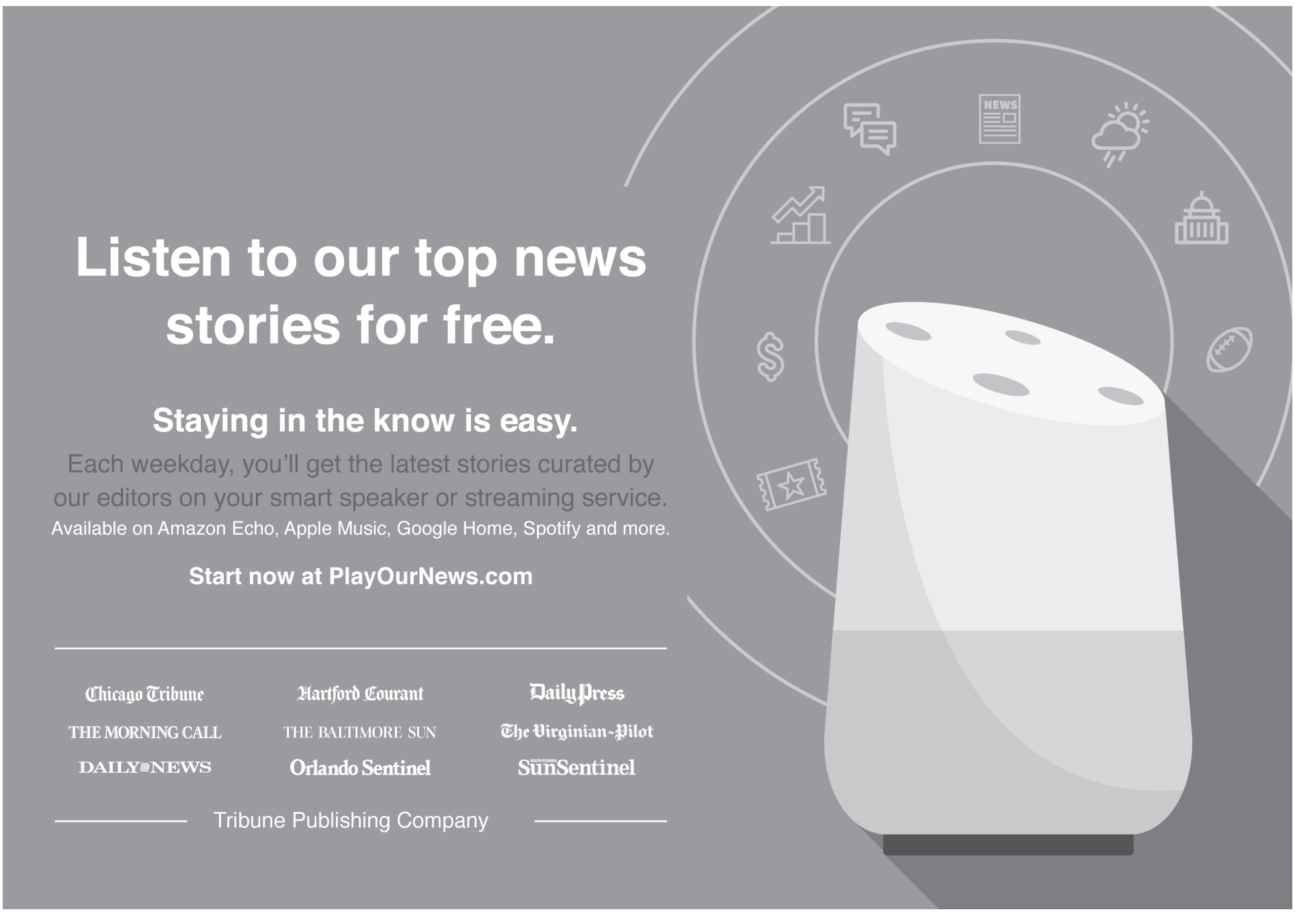
PLAY4 NIGHT
9 6 0 8 **WB:** 0

CASH 5
14 17 20 30 35

LUCKY FOR LIFE
8 10 12 17 23 **LB:** 10

Tuesday's est. Lotto jackpot: $2.9 million

Tonight's est. Powerball jackpot:
$20 million



FROM PAGE ONE

Orthodox observe Christmas while virus concerns persist

By Jim Heintz
Associated Press

MOSCOW — Orthodox Christians in Russia, Serbia and other countries began Christmas observances amid restrictions aimed at dampening the spread of the coronavirus, but few worshippers appeared concerned as they streamed into churches.

The majority of Orthodox believers celebrate Christmas on Jan. 7, with midnight services especially popular. The churches in Romania, Bulgaria, Cyprus and Greece mark it on Dec. 25 along with other Christian denominations.

The Russian Orthodox Church, the largest Orthodox congregation, said celebrants must wear masks and observe social distancing at services. But a live broadcast of the service from Moscow's huge Christ The Savior Cathedral indicated about half those attending had no masks or pulled them to their chins as they watched the pageantry of gold-robed priests, including church leader Patriarch Kirill, chant prayers and wave smoking containers of incense.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, also without a mask, attended a service at the Church of the Image of the Saviour Made Without Hands in Novo-Ogaryovo, outside Moscow.

Although Russia's daily tally of new infections has dropped by about half since a month ago, to about 15,000 Thursday, concern is strong that the highly contagious omicron variant may be getting a foothold in the country. Health Minister Mikhail Murashko said Thursday that officials have detected omicron infections in people who had not traveled outside Russia.

In Serbia's capital, Belgrade, hundreds of worshippers gathered outside St. Sava Temple, the largest Serbian Orthodox church, for the traditional burning of dried oak branches that symbolize the Yule log. The church also scheduled a midnight Christmas Eve liturgy.

No specific anti-virus measures were announced for Serbia's religious ceremonies despite a huge rise in infections apparently fueled by the omicron variant. Serbia on Thursday reported more than 9,000 new cases for the past 24 hours, which was the highest daily number since the start of the pandemic.

Health measures in Serbia include mandatory face mask use indoors and limits on gatherings, but the rules have not been fully respected. Vaccination passes are not required for bars, restaurants and clubs in the evening but not for churches or other indoor venues.

Serbian Patriarch Porfirije in his Christmas message singled out medical workers fighting the virus and said that "I pray for the sick to get well as soon as possible an for the disease that has attacked the world to pass."

"The Church therefore calls during the pandemic for the respect of reasonable measures and recommendations of governments and other authorities in the states and regions in which our people live, but also reminds everyone to avoid exclusion," Porfirije added.

In Kazakhstan, the sizable Orthodox community could not observe Christmas in churches because all religious services were canceled under a nationwide state of emergency imposed after clashes between protesters and police in several cities.



A soldier stands atop a military vehicle Friday in Kazakhstan. The Central Asian nation this week has seen its worst street protests in several decades. **RU-RTR RUSSIAN TELEVISION**

Kazakhstan's president authorizes lethal force

By Dasha Litvinova
Associated Press

MOSCOW — Kazakhstan's president authorized security forces on Friday to shoot to kill those participating in unrest, opening the door for a dramatic escalation in a crackdown on anti-government protests that have turned violent.

The Central Asian nation this week experienced its worst street protests since gaining independence from the Soviet Union three decades ago, and dozens have been killed in the tumult. The demonstrations began over a near-doubling of prices for fuel but quickly spread across the country, reflecting wider discontent with authoritarian rule.

In a televised address to the nation, President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev referred to those involved in the turmoil as "terrorists," "bandits" and "militants" — though it was unclear what led the peaceful protests to first gather steam and then descend into violence. No protest leaders have emerged so far.

"I have given the order to law enforcement and the army to shoot to kill without warning," Tokayev said. "Those who don't surrender will be eliminated."

Concerns grew in recent days that an even broader crackdown might be coming, as internet and cellphone service was severely disrupted and sometimes totally blocked, and several airports closed — making it difficult to understand what was happening inside the country and for images of the unrest to reach the outside world. Adding to those fears was Tokayev's request for help from a Russia-led military alliance, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, whose troops began arriving Thursday.

On Friday, Kazakhstan's Interior Ministry reported that security forces have killed 26 protesters during the unrest, which escalated sharply Wednesday. Another 26 were wounded and more than 3,800 people have been detained. A total of 18 law enforcement officers were reported killed, and over 700 injured.

The numbers could not be independently verified, and it was not clear if more people may have died in the melee as the protests turned extremely violent, with people storming government buildings and setting them ablaze.

More skirmishes in Almaty were reported Friday morning. Russia's state news agency Tass reported that the building occupied by the Kazakh branch of the Mir broadcaster, funded by several former Soviet states, was on fire.

But in other parts of the country, life started to return to normal. On Friday morning, news reports said the internet was partially restored in the capital, Nur-Sultan, but it remained unclear for how long.

The Almaty airport — stormed and seized earlier by the protesters — was back under the control of Kazakh law enforcement and CTSO forces, Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Igor Konashenkov said. But the facility will remain shut at least until Sunday, the Kazakh TV channel Khabar 24 reported, citing the airport's spokespeople.

Hours before he authorized the use of lethal force against those participating in unrest, Tokayev indicated that some measure of calm had been restored, saying "local authorities are in control of the situation."

Snow

from Page 1

for the unexpectedly high snow totals.

"The heavy band just crashed," Lessor said. "It shifted further east. It's now Middlesex, Tolland, Windham counties, which is going to save central Connecticut."

Visibility was poor. Tractor trailers on I-95 in Stonington, Greenwich and Norwalk jackknifed, with two of the crashes shutting down the highway. A major road in Bristol, Route 229, also closed because of a two-car crash that seriously injured a driver; police said they are looking into the possibility that snow played a role.

In all, state police said they responded to 99 crashes between 12:01 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. People were injured in three of the crashes. No one died.

More than 100 school systems across the state canceled classes. Some employers urged workers not to drive in, including Gov. Ned Lamont, who closed all executive branch offices, and nonessential employees for the town of Bloomfield were told to stay home.

The state Department of Transportation, plagued with a COVID-19-related plow driver shortage, suggested people stay off the roads and urged patience from those who ventured out.

Some departing and arriving flights were canceled at Bradley International Airport.

Metro-North Railroad trains were running on their Saturday schedule, with additional trains during the morning and evening rush, Metropolitan Transportation Authority staff said in an alert. Crews worked all night to clear platforms.

There were barely any power outages. The snow was light and fluffy, as opposed to the wet, heavy snow that weighs down tree branches, snaps them and takes out wires.

The storm was impressive nonetheless because of the amount of snow it produced — three times what meteorologists forecasted two days earlier, when they were expecting up to 4 inches.

They didn't expect a heavy band of snow that shifted right before dawn and stalled over the eastern part of the state, dropping more snow.

"Unfortunately, the [computer] models don't have the resolution to pick up where the band will be," Lessor said. "It apparently stayed there and just dumped."

The western part of the state — even the northwest corner, known for its colder, snowier weather — got much less snow than the east. Warren, for example, got only 2.8 inches, the National Weather Service said.

But the farther east one went, the higher the snow total: Vernon had 8 inches at 7 a.m., Lessor said. Southington had 8.5 and Coventry and Willington had 10.5.

The snow stopped falling by late Friday morning, finishing its run in the east last. It finished in the west first after having started shortly after midnight in Meriden and between midnight Thursday and 1 a.m. in Danbury, Lessor said.

The storm came two mornings after freezing rain caused Connecticut roads to become glazed with ice, causing hundreds of crashes, one of them deadly.

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Betting

from Page 1

cost of $70 million, including $23 million in CRDA state taxpayer-backed loans.

Freimuth said the sportsbook — to be located directly across the lower half of the arena from the fan club — would expand on the previous investments in the surrounding area. State financing for the new, 4,000-square-foot space is already in hand from funding previously approved for improvements at the arena, Freimuth said.

Ticket-holders in the arena would be able to move back and forth between events and the sportsbook by showing their tickets, Freimuth said.

The addition of a sportsbook at the XL Center comes after state lawmakers approved a long-debated sweeping expansion of legalized gambling in Connecticut in 2021. The legislation included the creation of sports betting venues at 15 locations, including larger ones in Hartford and Bridgeport.

So far, sports betting appears to be off to a strong start, based on early returns to state coffers. How successful a sportsbook at the XL Center would be is yet to be seen, but Freimuth said projections by the Connecticut Lottery Corp., which controls betting venues, calls for gambling growth at the XL.

Freimuth declined to disclose specifics of those projections because the XL Center is still in contract negotiations with the lottery for hosting the venue and its share of the proceeds. The lottery declined to comment Friday.

If the venue were to prove profitable and able to erase some of the typical yearly losses at the arena, it could help pave the way for a still pending, $100 million makeover of the aging arena that has been debated for years.

Critics say Connecticut should not continue to invest in a state-operated arena that loses money, about $2 million a year. Supporters say a significant makeover is necessary to downtown revitalization and keeping the arena competitive. They also say an upgrade benefits not just Hartford but the surrounding region.

There is funding waiting in the wings. The legislature approved another $65 million in borrowing for the project in 2020, but those funds have yet to be released by the State Bond Commission.

CRDA scrapped the idea of testing the public appetite for sports betting at the XL with an "interim location," deciding that going all in was the best strategy.

"We figured first blush was going to be lasting blush," Freimuth said. "And so, we wanted to do it right, once."

CRDA had considered other locations, including the arena's lower-level exhibition hall, the skybox-level Coliseum Club and the atrium at the main entrance off Trumbull Street.

The atrium is owned by Northland Investment Corp., and CRDA's efforts to purchase the space, so far, have been unsuccessful. Such a purchase makes more sense when, or if, the $100 million plan eventually goes forward, the space better used for expanding the concourse, Freimuth said.

Freimuth said locating the sportsbook on the Ann Uccello Street side of the arena is not such a stretch. An even grander, $250 million plan to upgrade, which never gained much traction with legislators, contemplated opening up the Ann Uccello side and making it more visually appealing, Freimuth said.

"It gives us a level of improvements in a part of the building that we haven't really worked on and it allows us to get at the sports betting thing, which I'm comfortable will be a break-even and headed toward making some money, too," Freimuth said.

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A sports betting venue could open at Hartford's XL Center this fall in time for the thick of the football season. A rendering shows how the 4,000-square-foot venue might look. **SCI ARCHITECTS**



The western side of the XL Center would be significantly changed by the addition of a sports betting venue facing Ann Uccello Street. This is how that side of the building now appears. **MARK MIRKO/HARTFORD COURANT**

WORLD&NATION
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Justices weigh Biden shot mandate

Conservatives seem skeptical over rule for large employers

By Mark Sherman and Jessica Gresko
Associated Press



The Supreme Court heard arguments Friday concerning President Biden's workplace vaccine rule. **ANNA MONEYMAKER/GETTY**

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court's conservative majority appeared skeptical Friday of the Biden administration's authority to impose a vaccine-or-testing requirement on the nation's large employers. The court seemed more open to a separate vaccine mandate for most health care workers.

The arguments in the two cases come at a time of spiking coronavirus cases because of the omicron variant, and the decision Friday by seven justices to wear masks for the first time while hearing arguments reflected the new phase of the pandemic. Justice Neil Gorsuch was the only justice to remain unmasked throughout the arguments, which lasted more than 3 ½ hours.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor, who has had diabetes since childhood, opted to remain in her office at the court and take part remotely. Two lawyers, representing Ohio and Louisiana, argued by telephone after recent positive COVID-19 tests, state officials said.

But the COVID-19 circumstances did not appear to outweigh the views of the court's six conservatives that the administration overstepped its authority in its vaccine-or-testing requirement for businesses with at least 100 employees.

"This is something the federal government has never done before," Chief Justice John Roberts said, casting doubt on the administration's argument that a half-century established law, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, confers such broad authority.

Roberts and Justices Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett probably hold the key to the outcome in both cases, as they have been more receptive to state-level vaccine requirements than the other three conservative justices. Barrett and Kavanaugh also had tough questions for Solicitor General Elizabeth Prelogar, the administration's top Supreme Court lawyer.

The court's three liberal justices suggested support for the employer rule. Justice Elena Kagan said officials have shown "quite clearly that no other policy will prevent sickness and death to anywhere like the degree that this one will." And Justice Stephen Breyer said he found it "unbelievable" that it could be in the "public interest" to put that rule on hold.

Beginning Monday, unvaccinated employees in big companies are supposed to wear masks at work, unless the court blocks enforcement. But testing requirements and potential fines for employers don't kick in until February.

Legal challenges to the policies from Republican-led states and business groups are in their early stages, but the outcome at the high court probably will determine the fate of vaccine requirements affecting more than 80 million people.

Roberts, Kavanaugh and Barrett seemed to have fewer doubts about the health care vaccine mandate. Kavanaugh said it was a "very unusual situation" that hospitals and health care organizations affected by the regulation were "not here complaining" about the rule but instead support it. "What are we to make of that?" he asked.

The second regulation is a mandate that would apply to virtually all health care staff in the country. It covers health care providers that receive federal Medicare or Medicaid funding, potentially affecting 76,000 health care facilities as well as home health care providers. The rule has medical and religious exemptions.

Decisions by federal appeals courts in New Orleans and St. Louis have blocked the mandate in about half the states. The administration has said it is taking steps to enforce it in the rest.

"I think effectively what is at stake is whether these mandates are going to go into effect at all," said Sean Marotta, a Washington lawyer whose clients include the American Hospital Association. The trade group is not involved in the Supreme Court cases.

Both vaccine rules would exacerbate labor shortages and be costly to businesses, lawyer Scott Keller argued Friday on behalf of more than two dozen business groups. Without an immediate order from the court, "workers will quit right away," Keller said.

Administration lawyer Prelogar told the justices that COVID-19 "is the deadliest pandemic in American history and it poses a unique workplace danger." OSHA has estimated that its emergency regulation will save 6,500 lives and prevent 250,000 hospitalizations over six months.

Nearly 207 million Americans are fully vaccinated, and more than a third of those have received booster shots, including the nine justices.

Andy Slavitt, a former adviser to the Biden administration on COVID-19, said the vaccine requirements are extremely effective for 15% to 20% of Americans "who don't like to get a shot but they will and don't have any strenuous objection."

The high court is weighing in on administration vaccine policies for the first time, although the justices have turned away pleas to block state-level mandates.

Both vaccination cases came to the court on an emergency basis, and the court took the unusual step of scheduling arguments rather than just ruling on briefs submitted by the parties. Unlike in other cases the court hears, a decision from the justices could come in weeks if not days.

Ahmaud Arbery's 3 killers sentenced to life in prison

1 will be eligible for parole after serving at least 30 years

By Russ Bynum
Associated Press



Ahmaud Arbery's father, Marcus Arbery, sits in court with other family members Friday for a sentencing hearing in Brunswick, Georgia. **STEPHEN B MORTON/AP**

BRUNSWICK, Ga. — Three white men convicted of murder for chasing and killing Ahmaud Arbery were sentenced to life in prison Friday, with a judge denying any chance of parole for the father and son who armed themselves and initiated the deadly pursuit of the 25-year-old Black man.

Murder carries a mandatory sentence of life in prison under Georgia law unless prosecutors seek the death penalty, which they opted against for Arbery's fatal shooting. For Superior Court Judge Timothy Walmsley, the main decision was whether to grant Greg and Travis McMichael and their neighbor, William "Roddie" Bryan, an eventual chance to earn parole.

The judge ordered both McMichaels to serve life without parole. Bryan was granted a chance of parole but must first serve at least 30 years in prison.

Walmsley said Arbery left his home for a jog and ended up running for his life for five minutes as the men chased him in pickup trucks until they finally cornered him.

"Ahmaud Arbery was hunted down and shot, and he was killed because individuals here in the courtroom took the law into their own hands," the judge said.

Before sentencing, Walmsley paused for a minute of silence to help give the scope of what those five minutes must have been like for Arbery.

"When I thought about this, I thought from a lot of different angles. I kept coming back to the terror that must have been in the mind of the young man running through Satilla Shores," he said, mentioning the neighborhood outside the port city of Brunswick where Arbery was killed.

During the sentencing hearing, Arbery's family had asked the judge to show no lenience.

Arbery's sister recalled his humor, describing him as a positive thinker with a big personality. She told the judge her brother had dark skin "that glistened in the sunlight," thick, curly hair and an athletic build, factors that made him a target for the men who pursued him.

"These are the qualities that made these men assume that Ahmaud was a dangerous criminal and chase them with guns drawn. To me, those qualities reflect a young man full of life and energy who looked like me and the people I loved," Jasmine Arbery said.

Arbery's mother said she suffered a personal, intense loss made worse by a trial where the men's defense was that Arbery made bad choices that led to his death.

"This wasn't a case of mistaken identity or mistaken fact. They chose to target my son because they didn't want him in their community. They chose to treat him differently than other people who frequently visited their community," Wanda Cooper-Jones said. "And when they couldn't sufficiently scare or intimidate him, they killed him."

The judge's sentences matched the recommendation of prosecutor Linda Dunikoski. She said all deserved that mandatory life sentence for showing "no empathy for the trapped and terrified Ahmaud Arbery."

Contending the McMichaels still believed they didn't do anything wrong, Dunikoski disclosed Friday that Greg McMichael gave cellphone video of the shooting recorded by Bryan to an attorney, who leaked it.

"He believed it was going to exonerate him," the prosecutor said.

Robert Rubin, one of Travis McMichael's defense attorneys, argued that his 35-year-old client deserved the possibility of parole. He said Travis McMichael opened fire only after "Mr. Arbery came at him and grabbed the gun." But Rubin also acknowledged his client's decisions to arm himself and chase Arbery were "reckless" and "thoughtless."

"They are not evidence of a soul so blackened as to deserve to spend the rest of his life in prison," Rubin said. "This was not a planned murder. This was a fight over a gun that led to Mr. Arbery's death."

Greg McMichael's lawyer, Laura Hogue, said her client didn't intend Arbery to die, never pulling his gun until his son fired his shotgun.

"Greg McMichael did not leave his home that day hoping to kill," Hogue told the judge. "He did not view his son firing that shotgun with anything other than fear and sadness. What this jury found was this was an unintentional act."

Bryan's lawyer Kevin Gough said his client showed remorse and cooperated with police, turning over the cellphone video of the shooting to help them get to the truth.

Defense attorneys have said they plan to appeal the convictions. They have 30 days after sentencing to file them. Next month, the McMichaels and Bryan face a second trial, this time in U.S. District Court on federal hate crime charges.



A nurse practitioner collects a nasal swab sample Thursday from Sebastian Hernandez, 5, in Tustin, Calif. **JAE C. HONG/AP**

COVID-19 hospitalizations rise in kids under 5

By Lindsey Tanner and Mike Stobbe
Associated Press

Hospitalizations of U.S. children under 5 with COVID-19 soared in recent weeks to their highest level since the pandemic began, according to government data released Friday on the only age group not yet eligible for the vaccine.

The worrisome trend in children too young to be vaccinated underscores the need for older kids and adults to get their shots to protect those around them, said Dr. Rochelle Walensky, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Since mid-December, as the highly contagious omicron variant has spread furiously around the country, the hospitalization rate in these youngest children has surged to more than 4 in 100,000 youngsters, up from 2.5 per 100,000.

That compares with a current rate of about 1 per 100,000 for children ages 5 to 17, according to CDC data.

In a statement, Walensky said that while children still have the lowest rate of hospitalization of any age group, "pediatric hospitalizations are at their highest rate compared to any prior point in the pandemic."

She noted that just over 50% of children ages 12 to 18 are fully vaccinated and only 16% of those 5 to 11 are fully vaccinated.

As of Tuesday, the average number of children and teens admitted to the hospital per day with COVID-19 was 766, double the figure reported just two weeks ago.

At a White House briefing this week, Dr. Anthony Fauci, the top U.S. infectious-disease expert, said many children hospitalized with COVID-19 have other health conditions that make them more susceptible to complications from the virus. That includes obesity, diabetes and lung disease.

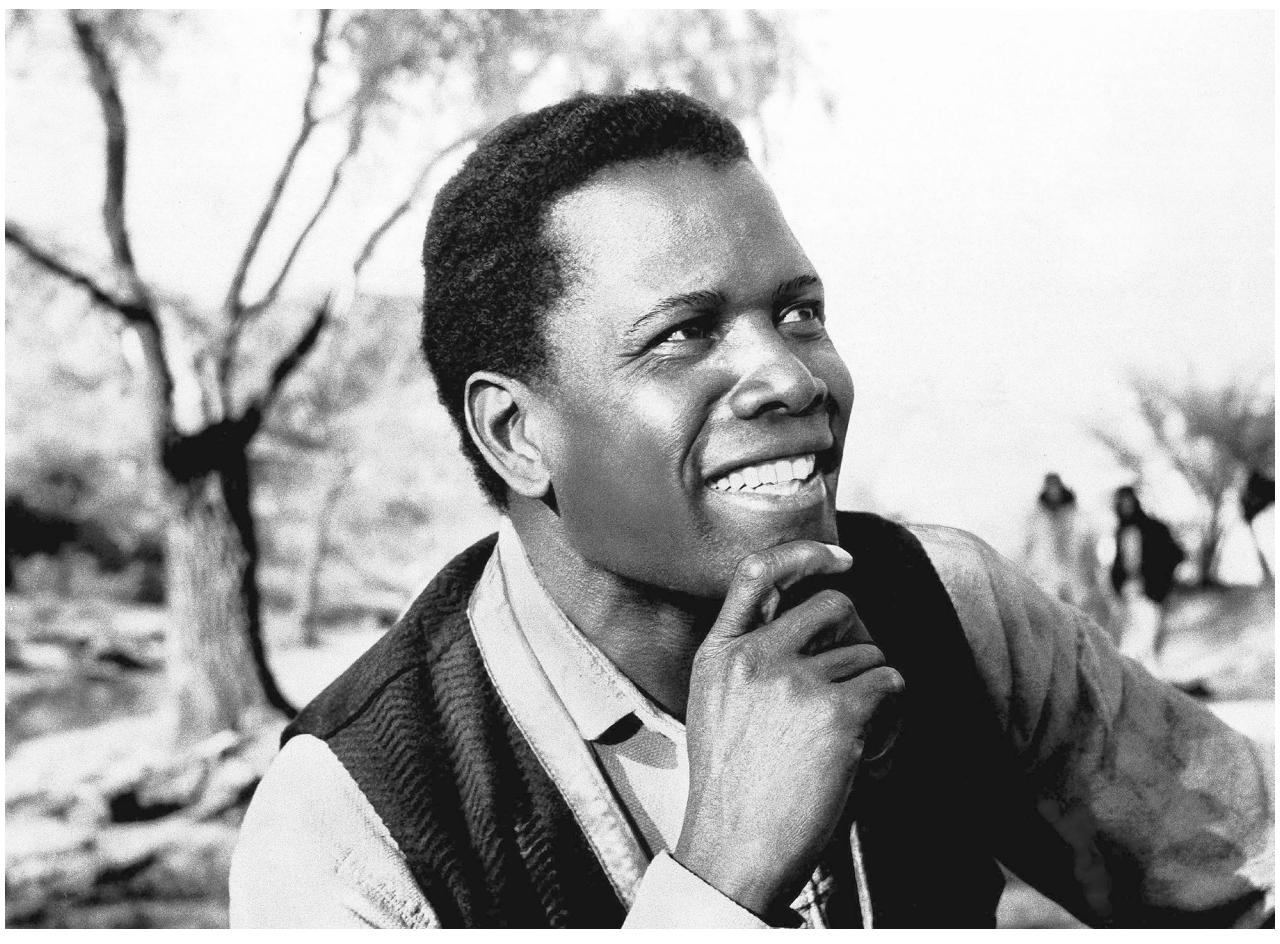
WORLD & NATION

SIDNEY POITIER 1927-2022

Star smashed Hollywood's standards

Transformed how Black actors were depicted on screen

By Hillel Italie
Associated Press



Sidney Poitier's rise to Hollywood stardom in the 1950s and '60s paralleled the civil rights movement in the U.S. **AP 1972**

NEW YORK — Sidney Poitier, the groundbreaking actor and enduring inspiration who transformed how Black people were portrayed on screen and became the first Black actor to win an Academy Award for best lead performance and the first to be a top box-office draw, has died. He was 94.

Poitier, winner of the best actor Oscar in 1964 for "Lilies of the Field," died Thursday at his Los Angeles home, according to Latrae Rahming, the director of communications for the Prime Minister of Bahamas.

Few movie stars, Black or white, had such an influence both on and off the screen. Before Poitier, no Black actor had a sustained career as a lead performer and rarely was one permitted a break from the stereotypes of bug-eyed servants and grinning entertainers.

Born in Miami, Poitier grew up in the Bahamas, the son of tomato farmers. He appeared in more than 25 films during the 1950s and 1960s and his rise paralleled the growth of the civil rights movement. As racial attitudes evolved and segregation laws were challenged and fell, Poitier was the performer to whom a cautious Hollywood turned for stories of progress.

He was a tough student in a violent high school in "Blackboard Jungle." He was the escaped Black convict who befriends a racist white prisoner (Tony Curtis) in "The Defiant Ones." He was the courtly office worker who falls in love with a blind white girl in "A Patch of Blue." He was the handyman in "Lilies of the Field" who builds a church for a group of nuns.

Poitier was for years not just the most popular Black movie star, but the only one.

"I made films when the only other Black on the lot was the shoeshine boy," he recalled in a 1988 Newsweek interview.

Poitier peaked in 1967 with three of the year's most notable movies: "To Sir, With Love," in which he starred as a school teacher who wins over his unruly students at a London high school; "In the Heat of the Night," as the determined police detective Virgil Tibbs; and in "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner," as the prominent doctor who wishes to marry a young white woman he only recently met, her parents played by Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn in their final film together.

His unique appeal brought him the same burdens as other pioneers such as Jackie Robinson and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. He was subjected to bigotry from whites and accusations of compromise from the Black community. Poitier was held, and held himself, to standards well above his white peers. He refused to play villains or cads and took on characters of almost divine goodness. He developed an even, but resolved and occasionally humorous persona crystallized in his most famous line — "They call me Mr. Tibbs!" — from "In the Heat of the Night."

Stardom didn't shield Poitier from racism or condescension. He had a hard time finding housing in Los Angeles and was followed by the Ku Klux Klan when he visited Mississippi in 1964, not long after three civil rights workers had been murdered there.

Poitier was not as engaged politically as his friend and contemporary Harry Belafonte, but he participated in the 1963 March on Washington and other civil rights events, and as an actor defended himself and risked his career. He refused to sign loyalty oaths during the 1950s, when Hollywood was blacklisting suspected Communists, and turned down roles he found offensive.

"Almost all the job opportunities were reflective of the stereotypical perception of Blacks that had infected the whole consciousness of the country," he recalled. "I came with an inability to do those things. It just wasn't in me."

His screen career faded in the late 1960s as political movements, Black and white, became more radical and movies more explicit. He acted less often, gave fewer interviews and began directing, his credits including the Richard Pryor-Gene Wilder farce "Stir Crazy," "Buck and the Preacher" (co-starring Poitier and Belafonte) and the Bill Cosby comedies "Uptown Saturday Night" and "Let's Do It Again."

In the 1980s and '90s, he appeared in the feature films "Sneakers" and "The Jackal" and several television movies, receiving an Emmy and Golden Globe nomination as future Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall in "Separate But Equal" and an Emmy nomination for his portrayal of Nelson Mandela in "Mandela and De Klerk."

As a citizen of the Bahamas, he was appointed in 1974 Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

Poitier had four daughters with his first wife, Juanita Hardy, and two with his second wife, actress Joanna Shimkus.

Omicron cases proving less severe

Hospitals fill up in variant hot spots, but ICUs may not

By Emily Anthes and Azeen Ghorayshi
The New York Times



People wait in line for a COVID-19 test Tuesday in Los Angeles. Experts warn that it is still too early, and there are not yet enough detailed data, to draw firm conclusions about the omicron variant's inherent severity. **JAE C. HONG/AP**

In hospitals around the country, doctors are taking notice: This wave of COVID-19 seems different from the last one.

Once again, as they face the highly contagious omicron variant, medical personnel are exhausted and are contracting the virus themselves.

And the numbers of patients entering hospitals with the variant are surging to staggering levels, filling up badly needed beds, delaying nonemergency procedures and increasing the risk that vulnerable uninfected patients will catch the virus.

But in omicron hot spots from New York to Florida to Texas, a smaller proportion of those patients are landing in intensive care units or requiring mechanical ventilation, doctors said. And many — 50% to 65% of admissions in some New York hospitals — show up at the hospital for other ailments and then test positive for the virus.

"We are seeing an increase in the number of hospitalizations," said Dr. Rahul Sharma, emergency physician in chief for NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell hospital.

But the severity of the disease looks different from previous waves, he said. "We're not sending as many patients to the ICU, we're not intubating as many patients, and actually, most of our patients that are coming to the emergency department that do test positive are actually being discharged."

Although it's still early for firm predictions, the shift in hospital patterns fits with emerging data that omicron may be a variant with inherently milder effects than those that have come before, less prone to infecting the lungs, where it can cause serious disease.

But the lower proportion of severe cases is also happening because, compared with previous variants, omicron is infecting more people who have some immunity, whether through prior infection or vaccination. The vast majority of omicron patients in ICUs are unvaccinated or have severely compromised immune systems, doctors said.

Hospitals, facing staff shortages, are under enormous strain. In New York City, hospitalizations have exceeded the peak of last winter's surge.

Gov. Larry Hogan of Maryland declared a state of emergency Tuesday, noting that the state had more hospitalized COVID-19 patients than at any previous point during the pandemic.

"We're in truly crushed mode," said Dr. Gabe Kelen, director of the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine's emergency department in Baltimore.

The number of ICU patients is a lagging indicator, likely to rise in the coming weeks, experts said. What's more, some states are still struggling under the crush of hospitalizations from delta, a previous version of the virus that may be more virulent. Hospitals are frequently in the dark about which variant newly admitted patients are infected with.

Still, several reports suggest that omicron is a foe different from the variants that came before. And the challenges hospitals face — at least so far — are less about stockpiling equipment and more about staffing and contagion, doctors said.

"Early on in the pandemic, we were worried about running out of things, like ventilators," said Dr. Ryan Maves, an infectious disease and critical care physician at the Wake Forest School of Medicine in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. "Now, the real limitations are obviously physical bed space, but even more so, it's staffing."

When reports emerged in early December that hospitals in South Africa were handling relatively few severe omicron cases, experts stressed that the findings should be interpreted with caution. South Africa has a relatively young population, and a large proportion had been infected by previous waves, leaving the affected people with some preexisting immunity.

But now that the virus has spread across the world, there is more evidence that many people who have been infected with omicron in recent weeks seem to be faring better than those who were infected with other variants or during earlier surges.

In Britain, people with omicron were about half as likely to require hospital care and one-third as likely to be admitted to the hospital from emergency rooms than those infected with delta, according to a government report released last week. Early reports from Canada suggest a similar pattern.

A new report from the Houston Methodist health care system, which has been sequencing the vast majority of viral samples from its patients since February 2020, found broadly the same thing.

By Dec. 20, the new variant was causing more than 90% of new COVID-19 cases at Houston Methodist. In the new analysis, researchers compared 1,313 symptomatic patients who had been infected with omicron by that date to Houston Methodist patients who had been infected with the delta or alpha variants beginning earlier in the pandemic.

The numbers of omicron cases examined in Houston are small, and it takes time for the worst outcomes to manifest. But fewer than 15% of those early omicron patients were hospitalized, compared with 43% of the delta patients and 55% of the alpha patients, the study found.

Among those who were admitted, omicron patients were also less likely to require mechanical ventilation and had shorter hospital stays than did those infected with the other variants.

"On average — and I'm stressing on average — the omicron cases are less severe," said Dr. James Musser, chair of pathology and genomic medicine at Houston Methodist, who led the research.

The omicron patients were also younger, and more likely to be vaccinated, than were those with previous variants, which may partially account for the milder illness.

Although the reports are encouraging, it is still too early, and there are not yet enough detailed data, to draw firm conclusions about omicron's inherent severity, said Natalie Dean, a biostatistician at Emory University in Atlanta.

In New York City, cases have been steadily rising since December and are now overwhelmingly accounted for by omicron. COVID-19 hospitalizations have also increased sharply, and ICU admissions have been rising more slowly.

At New York University's Langone Health, for example, around 65% of patients admitted with COVID-19 were "incidentally" found to have the virus, and their hospitalizations were not primarily because of the illness.

At NewYork-Presbyterian, just under half of COVID-19 admissions were incidental.

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TRIBUNE PUBLISHING

BUSINESS

US unemployment at 3.9% amid struggle to fill jobs

Rate reaches a pandemic low after employers add 199K positions in December

By Christopher Rugaber
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The nation's unemployment rate fell in December to a healthy 3.9% — a pandemic low — even as employers added a modest 199,000 jobs, evidence that they are struggling to fill jobs with many Americans reluctant to return to the workforce.

The drop in the jobless rate, from 4.2% in November, indicated that many more people found work last month. Indeed, despite the slight hiring gain reported by businesses, 651,000 more workers said they were employed in December compared with November.

Still, the data reported Friday by the Labor Department reflected the state of the job market in early December — before the spike in COVID-19 infections began to disrupt the economy. Economists have cautioned that job growth may slow in January and possibly February because of omicron cases, which have forced millions of newly infected workers to stay home and quarantine. The economy is still about 3.6 million jobs short of its pre-pandemic level.

For now, steady hiring is being driven by strong consumer demand that has remained resilient despite chronic supply shortages. Consumer spending and business purchases of equipment are likely propelling the economy to a robust annual growth rate of roughly 7% in the final three months of 2021. Americans' confidence in the economy rose slightly in December, according to the Conference Board, suggesting that spending was probably healthy for much of last month.

Wages also rose sharply in December, with average hourly pay jumping 4.7% compared with a year ago. That pay increase is a sign that companies are competing fiercely to fill their open jobs. A record-high wave of quitting, as many workers seek better jobs, is helping fuel pay raises.

Low unemployment and rapid wage gains, though, could further heighten inflation as companies raise prices to cover rising labor costs. Price increases have already surged to a four-decade high, prompting a sharp pivot by the Federal Reserve, from keeping rates low to support hiring to moving toward raising interest rates to combat inflation. Most economists expect the Fed to raise its benchmark short-term rate, now pegged near zero, in March and to do so two or three additional times this year.

"Companies are paying up for workers," said Neil Dutta, an economist at Renaissance Macro Research. "This is consistent with inflation well above 2%, which keeps the pressure on the Fed to raise interest rates."

Becky Frankiewicz, president of the staffing giant ManpowerGroup North America, said that many of Manpower's clients are shifting employees from temporary to permanent status, because with workers scarce, they want to "lock people up."

Frankiewicz said Manpower has calculated that because of omicron, absenteeism is running at three times its peak in 2021. Yet there has been "no slowdown in demand" for workers, she said.



The EU is being pressured to tweak rules on airport landing slots. Above, two Brussels Airlines jets in Belgium. **FRANCISCO SECO/AP 2020**

FLIGHTS TO NOWHERE

Near-empty planes take off to protect airlines' landing slots at key airports in Europe

By Raf Casert
Associated Press

BRUSSELS — Europe's sky is filling up with near-empty polluting planes that serve little other purpose than safeguarding airlines' valuable time slots at some of the world's most important airports.

The highly contagious omicron variant of COVID-19 has put many off flying, and because of it, getting people and goods from point A to point B has become an afterthought for thousands of flights. It has created strange bedfellows, with environmentalists and major airlines united to cut down on empty or near-empty flights by pressuring the European Union — a pledged global leader in combating climate change — to tweak the rules on airport slots.

"The EU surely is in a climate emergency mode," activist Greta Thunberg tweeted sarcastically this week, linking to a story about Brussels Airlines making unnecessary flights.

The company has said that if the EU doesn't take action, it would have to fly some 3,000 journeys this winter primarily to safeguard its network rights.

German giant Lufthansa said it would have to fly an additional 18,000 "unnecessary" flights through the winter to hold on to landing slots. Even if the holidays brought a big increase in passengers — marked by thousands of flight cancellations that left travelers stranded — the rest of the winter period could be slow.

Landing and departure slots for popular routes in the biggest airports are a precious commodity in the industry, and to keep them, airlines have to guarantee a high percentage of flights. It is why loss-making flights have to be maintained.

It was an accepted practice despite the pollution concerns, but the pandemic put that in question. Normally, airlines had to use 80% of their given slots to preserve their rights, but the EU has cut that to 50% to ensure as few empty or near-empty planes in the sky as possible.

In the U.S., the Federal Aviation Administration has waived similar minimum slot-use rules through March 26, citing the pandemic. Slots are limited at only a handful of U.S. airports, including Kennedy and LaGuardia in New York and Reagan Washington National outside Washington.

Last month, when there were hopes the pandemic might wane, the European Commission confirmed the 50% rule but said it would be increased to 64% at the end of March.

However, major airlines like Lufthansa, Air France and KLM say they are counting on further flexibility, including further decreasing the threshold level on time slots.

"More flexibility in the short term is required, not just in summer but also in the current winter schedule," Lufthansa said in a statement. "Without this crisis-related flexibility, airlines are forced to fly with planes almost empty, just to secure their slots."

KLM agreed.

"So if the remainder of the season is very disappointing, as an airline you can find yourself in the situation of either losing slots because you cancel flights or flying with half-empty aircraft. Both situations are not desirable," the Dutch company said.

It puts the EU in a bind. It needs to ensure that airport slots are open to fair competition, allowing newcomers to vie for them if they are not used sufficiently, but it also wants to keep polluting planes from flying as much as possible.

China lockdowns add to economy concerns

By Joe McDonald
Associated Press

BEIJING — China's lockdowns of big cities to fight coronavirus outbreaks are prompting concern about more disruptions to global industries after two makers of processor chips said their factories were affected.

That has added to unease about the omicron variant's global economic impact. Analysts warn Vietnam, Thailand and other countries important to manufacturing chains might impose anti-disease measures that would delay deliveries.

"Lockdowns in China are already causing disruptions," economists at Nomura said in a report Friday.

The biggest city in China's latest lockdowns is Xi'an, a metropolis of 13 million people in the west. It is less significant as a manufacturer than Wuhan, the central city that shut down in 2020 after the first coronavirus cases were spotted there. But Xi'an has factories that make processor chips for smartphones, auto parts and other goods for global and Chinese brands.

Samsung Electronics and Micron Technologies Ltd. say their factories in Xi'an are affected but they are trying to minimize disruptions by drawing on global production networks. Micron said some deliveries might be delayed.

Those factories make DRAM and NAND memory chips used in smartphones, personal computers and services.

Xi'an accounts for 42% of Samsung's NAND production and 15% of global supply, according to Shelly Jang of Fitch Ratings. Samsung makes about one-third of such chips.

The lockdown "will negatively affect NAND flash supply, if it is prolonged further," Jang said in an email.

Authorities also cut off access to parts of Ningbo, south of Shanghai, one of the world's busiest ports. That is slowing freight handling and has the potential to raise already high shipping costs.

Yuzhou, a city of 1.2 million in the central province of Henan, was locked down Thursday. Access to Yongji in neighboring Shanxi province was suspended after traces of the virus were found at a train station.

Heating cost relief gets boost in funding

By Ashraf Khalil
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration is distributing an additional $4.5 billion in funds to help low-income Americans cover heating costs during a second pandemic winter, with cold-weather states receiving the largest share, according to a state-by-state breakdown released Friday.

The funding boost — part of last year's $1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan coronavirus relief package — more than doubled the normal funding level of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, or LIHEAP. These funds represent the largest appropriation in a single year since the program was established in 1981.

President Joe Biden's administration also announced commitments from seven major utility companies across the country to guarantee no shutoffs for customers seeking assistance and to identify and notify recipients eligible for government aid.

The fresh commitments come from Atlantic City Electric, Baltimore Gas and Electric, ComEd, Delmarva Power, Pacific Gas & Electric, PECO and Pepco. They join seven other major utility companies that made similar pledges late last year.

Electricity and natural gas prices are roughly 11% higher than a year ago, according to the Labor Department's consumer price index. Residential heating oil prices are up about 40% from a year ago, according to the Energy Information Administration. The extent of the increase has moderated in recent months as wholesale heating oil prices are roughly where they were at the start of October. Republican lawmakers have said the overall relief package, which Biden signed into law in March, has caused higher levels of inflation by pumping too much money into the economy.

BUSINESS BRIEFING

Inflation climbs to record in EU

LONDON — Consumer prices in the 19 countries that use the euro currency soared at a record rate, led by a surge in food and energy costs, figures showed Friday.

Inflation rose to 5% in December compared with a year earlier, according to Eurostat, the European Union's statistical office. That is the highest level in the eurozone since recordkeeping began in 1997, breaking the record of 4.9% set in November.

Energy costs spiked again in December, jumping at an annual rate of 26%, though that was a bit lower than the previous month, according to Eurostat's data. A stronger rise in food costs contributed to the increase in overall inflation, picking up pace to 3.2%, higher than the 2.2% rate posted in November.

The Athletic site bought by NYT

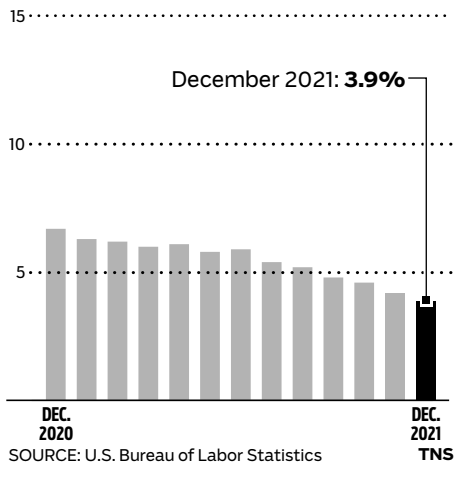
The New York Times Co. is buying sports news site The Athletic for $550 million, the latest move in its strategy to expand its audience of paying subscribers as the newspaper print ads business fades.

The Times, unlike many local news outlets, has thrived in the past several years. It gained millions of subscribers during the Trump presidency and the pandemic, keeping it on track for its previously stated goal of 10 million by 2025. As of the most recent quarter, the Times had nearly 8.4 million.

San Francisco-based The Athletic covers national and local sports — more than 200 teams, according to the Times in a statement Thursday. It was founded in 2016 and has 1.2 million subscribers. Its website says it has over 400 editorial employees.

Jobless rate

Percent of civilian labor force that is unemployed, by month, seasonally adjusted



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics TNS

BUSINESS



Intense competition in the electric pickup truck market means battery-powered vehicles are going mainstream. Above, the 2024 Chevrolet Silverado EV RST. **PAUL SANCYA/AP**

New GM electric truck faces competition, skeptical drivers

By Tom Krisher
Associated Press

PITTSFIELD TOWNSHIP, Mich. — The competition among U.S. automakers for a still-small pool of consumers seeking electric vehicles is intensifying.

General Motors, normally the top-selling U.S. automaker, officially unveiled the Chevrolet Silverado EV this week with a virtual press conference at the CES gadget show. Work truck versions go on sale in the spring of 2023, followed in the fall by a high-end consumer version.

By then, they'll face competition from rival Ford's electric F-150, startup Rivian's R1T, and possibly Tesla's Cybertruck. Stellantis, formerly Fiat Chrysler, has promised an all-electric Ram.

Industry analysts say the intense competition in the electric pickup market means that battery-powered vehicles are moving into the mainstream.

Pickups are among the most popular vehicles in the nation. Ford's F-Series is traditionally the top-selling vehicle in America, followed by Stellantis' Ram pickup and the Silverado. Automakers sold more than 2.3 million big pickups last year, about 15% of all vehicles sold in the U.S. Many go for well over $50,000 and are a huge source of profits and jobs with the automakers.

But converting buyers from gas-powered and diesel-powered V8 and V6 engines may be a tough sell.

"These are very loyal buyers, and they're not only loyal to the brands, they're loyal to the engines," said Jeff Schuster, president of global forecasting for LMC Automotive, an industry consulting firm. "They know all the specs of what they're driving"

Brian James, who works for a Birmingham, Michigan, company that supplies heaters and dehumidifiers for construction sites, says an electric truck wouldn't work for his business with clients in four states.

Some days they drive more than 400 miles one-way to deliver heaters. "I go there. I deliver two heaters, and I've got to drive back," James said. "How long is it going to take me to charge the batteries?" for the return trip, he asked, also wondering where charging stations would be located.

GM says the new Silverado EV has all the answers. It's planning to sell the truck's roomier cabin and better handling than its combustion trucks. The Silverado, and competitors, also have the ability to power tools on the job site, tow trailers and even power a house when the electricity goes out.

The initial Silverado work truck, and a version for consumers that comes out in the fall of 2023, will be able to travel 400 miles on a single charge. It can handle direct-current fast chargers and get up to 100 miles of range in 10 minutes.

To ease anxiety over running out of juice, the truck will map a driver's route, showing the optimal charging stations along the way, said Nichole Kraatz, chief engineer on the truck.

GM wouldn't say the price of the first work truck, but said the early retail version, the RST, will start at $105,000.

Dems blast corporate profits while inflation keeps surging

By Jeanna Smialek
The New York Times



White House press secretary Jen Psaki has pointed to excessive profits in certain industries as one factor that's

Inflation remains rapid as the economy enters 2022, and Democrats have begun pointing to a new culprit for the high and lasting price increases: Greedy corporations.

Sen. Sherrod Brown of Ohio, Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, and White House spokesperson Jen Psaki, have been among those pointing to excessive profits in certain industries as one thing jacking up costs for consumers. They don't blame overall inflation on price-gouging businesses — but the implication is that higher prices are partly the product of corporate opportunism.

The explanation for inflation is the latest in a string Democrats have offered since price gains shot up to uncomfortably high levels last year. It is partly grounded in economic reality, partly in political necessity: Rising prices are burdening and unsettling consumers, making them a liability for a party with a tenuous hold on congressional control headed into 2022 midterm elections.

Prices are increasing at the fastest pace since 1982, and while inflation is broadly expected to fade in the year ahead, the speed and extent of that moderation is uncertain. Even if price gains slow down, they could remain a headache for the Biden administration if they continue to rise more rapidly than was normal before the pandemic — which is what economists increasingly expect. They had hovered around or below 2% for years, but Federal Reserve officials think they will reach an average of 2.6% by the end of this year.

Administration officials and prominent lawmakers have refined their message to focus more blame on corporations, especially those in industries with a handful of powerful firms, like meat processing or gas.

Many companies are raking in bigger profits as they successfully raise their prices or discount less while still managing to sell as much or more.

But economists have pointed out that in many cases, blaming big firms for worsening inflation is overly simplistic. Industries have been relatively concentrated for years, but businesses now have the wherewithal to charge more because consumers are spending strongly. That owes partly to government stimulus checks and other benefits.

"It's what you would fully expect when demand goes up," said Jason Furman, a Harvard economist and a former chair of the White House Council of Economic Advisers during the Obama administration.

The laws of supply and demand have not stopped many on the political left from calling companies out.

"Profits at the biggest U.S. companies shot above $3 trillion this year, and the margins keep growing," Brown, chair of the Senate Banking Committee, said during a recent hearing. "Megacorporations would rather pass higher costs on to consumers than cut into their profits."

Warren has pointed to robust corporate profits as a sign companies are partly to blame for rising costs.

"Corporations are exploiting the pandemic to gouge consumers with higher prices on everyday essentials," she posted on Twitter on Nov. 26.

And White House economic advisers have pointed to what they have called price gouging behavior in a few specific, concentrated industries. Biden has publicly encouraged an examination of oil company pricing, and the administration has announced measures to try to combat price fixing in meat processing, pointing out that four large companies control 85% of the beef market.

It is the case that big company profits are surging across many industries, a sign that companies are either selling more goods and services or are managing to eke more profit out of each unit that they are selling thanks to higher prices or better productivity. Based on corporate earnings calls and a spate of data, it is likely a combination of those factors.

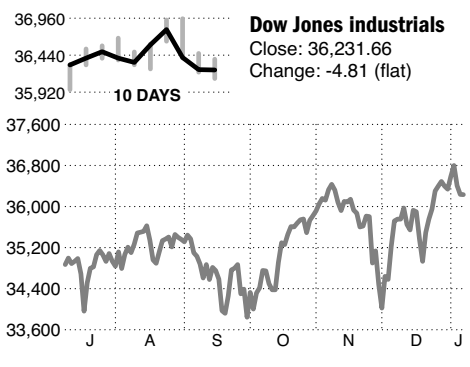
MARKET RUNDOWN

Saturday, January 8, 2022

DOW 36,231.66 -4.81

10-YR T-BOND 1.76% +.03

GOLD $1,797.00 +8.30



Commodities

FUELS	CLOSE	PREV.	YTD
Crude Oil (bbl)	78.90	79.46	+4.91%
Natural Gas (mm btu)	3.92	3.81	+4.99%
Unleaded Gas (gal)	2.30	2.30	+3.17%
METALS	**CLOSE**	**PREV.**	**YTD**
Gold (oz)	1,797.00	1,788.70	-1.67%
Silver (oz)	22.39	22.17	-4.00%

(Previous and change figures reflect current contract.)

Foreign Exchange

	ForEx in U.S. $	U.S. $ in ForEx
Britain	1.3596	.7355
Canada	.7915	1.2634
China	.1568	6.3778
Euro	1.1363	.8801
Japan	.008654	115.56
Mexico	.049084	20.3732

Money Rates

	CLOSE	PREV. WK.
Prime rate	3.25	3.25
3-mo. T-Bill	0.10	0.08
6-mo. T-Bill	0.24	0.23
5-yr T-Note	1.50	1.37
10-yr T-Note	1.76	1.66
30-yr T-Bond	2.11	2.07

Domestic Indexes

	CLOSE	CHG.	YTD
DOW Indus.	36,231.66	-4.81	-.29%
DOW Trans.	16,268.77	-76.48	-1.27%
DOW Util.	968.10	+5.64	-1.29%
NYSE Comp.	17,166.28	+9.76	+.01%
Nasdaq Comp.	14,935.90	-144.96	-4.53%
S&P 500	4,677.03	-19.02	-1.87%
S&P 400	2,793.14	-21.67	-1.72%
Wilshire 5000	47,321.14	-221.65	-2.35%
Russell 2000	2,179.81	-26.56	-2.92%

Global Markets

	CLOSE	CHG.	%CHG.	%YTD
Frankfurt	15,947.74	-104.29	-.65%	+.40%
London	7,485.28	+34.91	+.47%	+1.36%
Hong Kong	23,493.38	+420.52	+1.82%	+.41%
Nikkei	28,478.56	-9.31	-.03%	-1.09%

Stocks of Local Interest

STOCK (TICKER)	CLOSE	CHG.	YTD %CHG
AMC Entertainment A (AMC)	22.99	+.53	-15.5
AT&T Inc (T)	26.29	+.70	+6.9
Absci Corp (ABSI)	7.19	+1.05	-12.3
Adv Micro Dev (AMD)	132.00	-4.23	-8.3
American Airlines Gp (AAL)	19.28	+.71	+7.3
Amphenol Corp (APH)	82.12	-3.07	-6.1
Apple Inc (AAPL)	172.17	+.17	-3.0
Avangrid Inc (AGR)	50.14	+.48	+.5
Bank of America (BAC)	49.18	+1.05	+10.5
Barnes Group (B)	47.94	-.07	+2.9
Booking Holdings (BKNG)	2434.58	+4.61	+1.5
Brist Myr Sqb (BMY)	62.83	+1.35	+.8
CVS Health Corp (CVS)	104.19	+1.60	+1.0
Carnival Corp (CCL)	21.90	+.83	+8.8
Carrier Global Corp (CARR)	51.84	-1.66	-4.4
Charter Communic (CHTR)	610.49	-21.46	-6.4
Cigna Corp (CI)	233.18	+5.64	+1.5
Citigroup (C)	65.78	+.87	+8.9
Clover Hlth Inv (CLOV)	3.16	-.19	-15.1
Comcast Corp A (CMCSA)	50.05	-.46	-.6
DiDi Global Inc (DIDI)	4.50	-.20	-9.6
Discovery Inc A (DISCA)	30.06	+4.34	+27.7
Disney (DIS)	157.83	+.93	+1.9
Dogness Internationa (DOGZ)	3.44	+.11	-59.1
DraftKings Inc (DKNG)	27.24	+1.44	-.8
EMCOR Group Inc (EME)	125.57	-2.29	-1.4
Ethan Allen (ETD)	26.43	-.25	+.5
Eversource Energy (ES)	89.66	+.76	-1.5
Exxon Mobil Corp (XOM)	68.88	+.56	+12.6
Ford Motor (F)	24.44	-.02	+17.7
FuelCell Energy (FCEL)	5.10	-.04	-1.9
Gen Dynamics (GD)	212.09	+.35	+1.7
Gen Electric (GE)	101.40	+1.45	+7.3
Hartford Fn Sv (HIG)	72.06	+.56	+4.4
Honeywell Intl (HON)	215.75	+4.93	+3.5
Horizon Tech Fin (HRZN)	16.00	+.21	+.5
Hour Loop Inc (HOUR)	7.99	...	...
Infosys Ltd (INFY)	24.20	+.09	-4.4
Intel Corp (INTC)	53.44	-.57	+3.8
Kaman (KAMN)	44.59	+.28	+3.3
Keycorp (KEY)	26.35	+.42	+13.9
Lincoln Natl Corp (LNC)	73.10	+.96	+7.1
Lucid Group Inc (LCID)	41.98	+3.76	+10.3
MGM Resorts Intl (MGM)	44.53	+.21	-.8
Magellan Health Inc (MGLN)	94.99	...	...

STOCK (TICKER)	CLOSE	CHG.	YTD %CHG
Marin Software Inc (MRIN)	4.53	+1.08	+22.1
MetLife Inc (MET)	67.26	+.81	+7.6
Microsoft Corp (MSFT)	314.04	+.16	-6.6
Novartis AG (NVS)	89.31	+1.02	+2.1
Nvidia Corporation (NVDA)	272.47	-9.31	-7.4
OneSmart Intl Educ (ONE)	.29	+.01	-27.5
Opendoor Technol (OPEN)	11.36	-.44	-22.2
Otis Worldwide Corp (OTIS)	84.36	-.35	-3.1
Palantir Technol (PLTR)	16.56	-.18	-9.1
Peoples Utd Fncl (PBCT)	20.39	+.52	+14.4
Pfizer Inc (PFE)	55.72	+.88	-5.6
Pitney Bowes (PBI)	6.64	+.09	+.2
Prudential Fncl (PRU)	114.79	+1.57	+6.1
Pub Svc Ent Gp (PEG)	67.00	+1.11	+.4
Quoin Pharma Ltd ADS (QNRX)	2.08	+.34	+14.3
Raytheon Technolog (RTX)	90.44	+.38	+5.1
Robinhood Markets A (HOOD)	15.89	+.31	-10.5
Rogers Corp (ROG)	273.96	+.51	+.4
Roblox Corp (RBLX)	84.37	-4.83	-18.2
SS&C Technlogies (SSNC)	82.96	+.01	+1.2
SoFi Technologies (SOFI)	13.74	-.04	-13.1
Stanley Black & Deck (SWK)	189.29	-3.21	+.4
Starwood Prop Trust (STWD)	24.87	-.10	+2.3
Sundial Growers Inc (SNDL)	.60	+.01	+3.1
Terex Corp (TEX)	45.44	-.74	+3.4
Tesla Inc (TSLA)	1026.96	-37.74	-2.8
Tilray Inc (TLRY)	6.42	-.02	-8.7
Travelers Cos (TRV)	166.24	+3.91	+6.3
Uber Technologies (UBER)	41.51	-.52	-1.0
United Rentals (URI)	325.98	-9.19	-1.9
UnitedHealth Group (UNH)	458.60	-11.05	-8.7
Verizon Comm (VZ)	54.24	+1.12	+4.4
ViacomCBS Inc B (VIAC)	35.39	+2.67	+17.3
Virtus Invest (VRTS)	290.01	+5.79	-2.4
Voya Financial (VOYA)	72.54	+1.47	+9.4
Webster Financial (WBS)	63.16	+1.30	+13.1
Wells Fargo & Co (WFC)	54.77	+1.14	+14.2
White Mtns Insur (WTM)	1029.06	+10.57	+1.5
World Wrestling Ent (WWE)	50.02	+1.00	+1.4
XPO Logistics Inc (XPO)	71.40	-1.42	-7.8
Xerox Holdings Corp (XRX)	23.70	+.06	+4.7
Zynga Inc (ZNGA)	6.00	-.09	-6.3

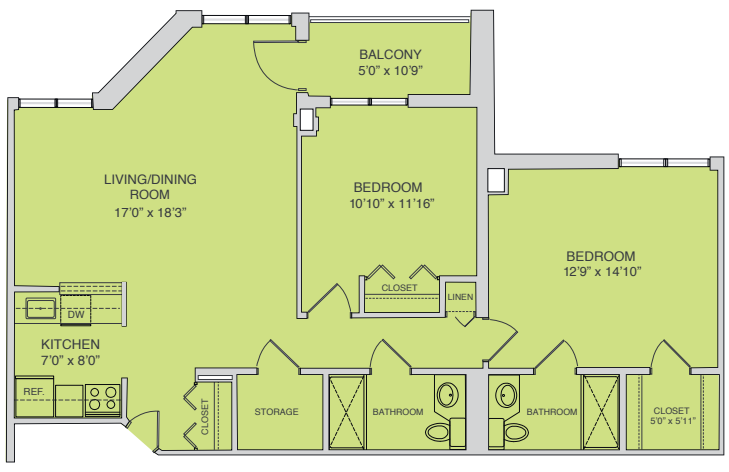
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OPINION

EDITORIAL

Sacred Heart's 92-4 game became a lesson for all

There's a reason they call it a "mercy rule."

But mercy was nowhere to be found in the game between Sacred Heart Academy of Hamden and Lyman Hall-Wallingford of Wallingford when the girls high school basketball teams played this week.

To say it was a mismatch was an understatement, given that the final score was 92-4.

We can only imagine how it felt to be part of the Lyman Hall team, one of their coaches, or a family member or friend watching the Sacred Heart team steamroll their way to that score.

And it was the right thing to do when Sacred Heart president Sister Sheila O'Neill issued a statement that expressed deep contrition.

"Sacred Heart Academy Administration and Athletics are deeply remorseful for the manner through with the outcome of the game was achieved," O'Neill wrote.

"We are in communication with Lyman Hall High School, the Southern Connecticut Conference and CIAC, and are addressing these concerns internally to ensure that our athletic programs continue to encourage personal, physical and intellectual growth."

But this deep look into how important it is to recognize there is much more to education than the topics such math and science bring also is a good step for this school and other schools as the fallout from this game is assessed.

"Sacred Heart Academy values the lessons taught and cultivated through athletic participation including ethical and responsible behavior, leadership and strength of character and respect for one's opponents," O'Neill said in her statement. "Last night's Girls' Basketball game vs Lyman Hall High School does not align with our values or philosophies."

As we have reported, there are no rules to govern a game with a score like that in basketball. But there is in football, where "running time" is invoked once a team is far ahead, and in baseball and softball, where there is a "mercy rule" to end a game early.

Such mercy would have been well used in the Sacred Heart versus Lyman Hall game.

Lyman Hall coach Tom Lipka told the Courant in an email, "They showed no mercy throughout."

This came while Sacred Heart is known as one of the best teams in the state with previous wins over Stamford, 83-48, and Shelton, 80-37.

Lipka said: "They fast-breaked the entire game right to the end. They never went into a zone and continued to push the ball up the court and shoot threes whenever they could."

"Sacred Heart pressed for most of the first half then called it off and went into a tight man-to-man defense trying to get steals," Lipka said.

Unfortunately, neither Coach Jason Kirck nor AD Ray Degnan would comment.

But ethical behavior has been and remains an important part of sportsmanship.

Sacred Heart's own goal is its students to be "inspired to lead and make a difference," while guided by "integrity, compassion, social justice, community," the school notes on its website.

And while the ability of the Sacred Heart players is undeniable, the game needs to serve as an example for adults and students alike that winning isn't everything.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

How could Blumenthal attend Communist event?

It appears that Sen. Richard Blumenthal will go just about anywhere and say just about anything to troll for votes. Recently he outdid himself. On Dec. 12, he was "happy and excited" to speak at an awards ceremony given by the Connecticut People's World Committee, a Communist Party subgroup [courant.com, Dec. 17, "Blumenthal said he would not have attended awards ceremony if he knew it was tied to Communist Party"].

It's hard to imagine an elected American politician, whose oath of office requires him to swear or affirm support for the Constitution, betraying that oath by supporting a group whose ideology is to overthrow that founding American document. Hard to imagine, but not for Dick Blumenthal. He later said he was sorry. Just like when he lied about his involvement in the Vietnam War. Time for Blumenthal to be voted out of office.

Lucille Paige, Torrington

Wethersfield student's op-ed will help many

I am impressed with the maturity of Andrew Strong, a 16-year old junior at Wethersfield High School who wrote of his mental health history [courant.com, Jan 4, "Mental health illness used to have control of me, and now I have control of it"]. It was selfless of him to open up about his own struggles in the hopes of destigmatizing problems such as depression. The latter is a very difficult topic for people to discuss at any age, and the fact that he has been his own advocate for seeking help at such an early age is admirable.

Depression and other mental health issues are common among students his age, and he has done them a tremendous service in sharing his experience. Hopefully his article will encourage students to talk to their parents, teachers, coaches or guidance counselors and seek help as he has done. Mental health concerns among school children are not uncommon, and they have been exacerbated by social restrictions resulting from the pandemic. Andrew, good luck in the future, and thank you for being the voice for so many others.

Stephanie Levine, Bloomfield

It is a disgrace to support Republican Party

Reading the Courant about the political operation of the Republicans, it actually made me feel ill and I could not read the entire article [Page 5, Jan. 4, "The full picture is coming to light"]. How anyone supports an individual who is responsible for the insurrection and murder of five people is beyond my comprehension. It is a disgrace to our country.

Susan Beth Aldrich, West Hartford

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We welcome all submissions and will publish the best. We especially look for younger writers and those whose voices aren't heard often enough. Essays should be 600-700 words, written in the first person and emailed to oped@courant.com.

The fact that Republicans oppose federal voting guarantees is no reason to give them veto power over bills aimed at repairing abuses their fellow partisans are enacting at the state level.



People gather on the National Mall in Washington on Thursday to mark the one-year anniversary of the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol.
SHURAN HUANG/THE NEW YORK TIMES

OP-ED

Accountability for Jan. 6 requires political reform

By E.J. Dionne Jr.
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol was an attempt, through force and violence, to overturn the will of the majority expressed in a free and fair election. In a well-functioning democratic republic, its anniversary would engender a commitment across party lines to protecting and enhancing our system of self-rule.

At the moment, we do not live in such a republic. One of our two major political parties refuses to face up to what happened. Worse, the Republican Party has been using Donald Trump's lies about the 2020 election as a pretext to restrict access to the ballot box in many GOP-controlled states and to undermine honest ballot counts by allowing partisan bodies to seize control of the electoral process.

It is important to understand Jan. 6 as a political event and not be misled by a desire to sweep our divisions under a rug woven of well-meaning wishful thinking. While condemnations of the bloody aggression initially crossed party lines, most Republican politicians either retreated into silence bred by fear of Trump or set out to minimize the assault on police officers and the vandalizing of public space as a "protest."

The violence of Jan. 6 was not in the service of some great cause. The deaths of Capitol Police officers, the beating of others, the degradation of the Capitol and the terrorizing of officials and staff were all rooted in one man's selfish indifference to the obligations of democratic leadership. Trump provoked the attack on the counting of electoral votes because he hoped to rig an election. How fitting that he recently gave his "complete support" to Hungary's strongman, Viktor Orban.

In their shared version of politics, authoritarian bosses don't let mere citizens get in their way.

The tell as to how much Trump has corrupted his party is its embrace of a wholly new position on federal guarantees of voting rights.

One of the most deeply honorable aspects of the history of the Republican Party was its commitment to universal suffrage after the Civil War — which at the time meant the full enfranchisement of formerly enslaved Black Americans.

Against the wishes of a Democratic Party then suffused by racism, the GOP pushed through the 14th and 15th Amendments, authorizing use of the federal government's power to protect civil and voting rights. A century later, the Republican Party was also pivotal in passing the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

These days, mimicking the reactionary Southern Democrats of old, Republicans sound the tocsin of "states' rights" in opposing a repaired Voting Rights Act and the Freedom to Vote Act, which is designed to fight the voter suppression and election subversion that lie at the heart of Trumpism.

It's this inversion of history that makes all the more ominous a new argument being advanced to block the democracy bills. The idea is that because Republicans now oppose what they used to support, Democrats, in the name of "bipartisanship," should abandon their commitment to protecting voting rights and ballot access and settle for reforms that affect only what happens after ballots are cast.

This would include reforming the Electoral Count Act of 1887, whose weaknesses in defining how Congress and the vice president should act in counting electoral votes were exposed by Trump's machinations.

Of course we should reform the Electoral Count Act, and the House commission investigating Jan. 6 could well propose doing so. But there is little point in having a nice, orderly count of the electoral college votes if the elections that produce its members (and those in the House and Senate) are marred by efforts to make it more difficult for citizens to vote and by the systematic exclusion of some groups from casting ballots.

The fact that Republicans oppose federal voting guarantees is no reason to give them veto power over bills aimed at repairing abuses their fellow partisans are enacting at the state level. Imagine if Republicans in the Reconstruction Era had said: "Oh, gee whiz, Democrats won't support the 14th and 15th Amendments, so let's give up on equal rights in the name of bipartisanship."

Civil War- and Reconstruction-era metaphors are, alas, entirely on point when it comes to Jan. 6. It's no accident that some of the criminals who invaded the Capitol waved Confederate flags. Now, as then, we are witnessing violent efforts to undercut advances in democracy and reactionary schemes in many states to impede access to the ballot. The struggle again divides our political parties, though their roles have reversed.

Accountability for the events of Jan. 6 must be legal but also political. At issue is whether we are the democratic republic we claim to be. A Congress that refuses to enforce the equal rights the insurrectionists rose up to reject would be capitulating to some of the worst impulses in our nation's history.

E.J. Dionne writes about politics for The Washington Post.

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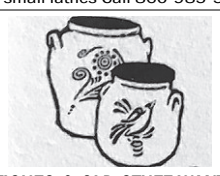
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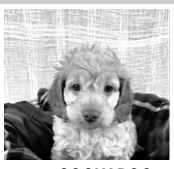


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PUBLIC NOTICES

Connecticut

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
FirstLight CT Hydro LLC Project No. 2662-037
NOTICE OF APPLICATION ACCEPTED FOR FILING AND SOLICITING COMMENTS, MOTIONS TO INTERVENE, AND PROTESTS
(January 4, 2022)

Take notice that the following hydroelectric application has been filed with the Commission and is available for public inspection:
a. Application Type: Non-capacity amendment of license for project boundary
b. Project No: 2662-037
c. Date Filed: March 4, 2021, as supplemented on September 8 and December 3, 2021
d. Applicant: FirstLight CT Hydro LLC
e. Name of Project: Scotland Hydroelectric Project
f. Location: The Scotland Project is located on the Shetucket River, in Windham County, Connecticut.
g. Filed Pursuant to: Federal Power Act, 16 USC 791a - 825r
h. Applicant Contact: Alan Douglass, Regulatory Compliance Manager, (413) 659-4416, alan.douglass@firstlightpower.com
i. FERC Contact: Christopher Chaney, (202) 502-6778, christopher.chaney@ferc.gov
j. Deadline for filing comments, motions to intervene, and protests: February 3, 2022
The Commission strongly encourages electronic filing. Please file comments, motions to intervene, and protests using the Commission's eFiling system at http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/efiling.asp. Commenters can submit brief comments up to 6,000 characters, without prior registration, using the eComment system at http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/ecomment.asp. You must include your name and contact information at the end of your comments. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov, (866) 208-3676 (toll free), or (202) 502-8659 (TTY). In lieu of electronic filing, you may submit a paper copy. Submissions sent via the U.S. Postal Service must be addressed to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426. Submissions sent via any other carrier must be addressed to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 12225 Wilkins Avenue, Rockville, Maryland 20852. The first page of any filing should include docket number P-2662-037. Comments emailed to Commission staff are not considered part of the Commission record.
k. Description of Request: On November 21, 2013, the Commission issued a new license for the Scotland Project with the boundary around the project reservoir at a contour elevation of 127 feet USGS datum. The approved boundary line is shown on the project's current Exhibit G (project boundary) drawings. The licensee seeks Commission approval of revised Exhibit G drawings that show a modified project boundary, based on improvements to the project's survey and property rights information. The modified boundary would remain at the 127-foot contour around the reservoir; however, the more accurate boundary line would enclose either more or less lands in certain areas to better follow the contour. The licensee also proposes boundary revisions near the dam and powerhouse to ensure all project facilities (e.g., fish passage, access road, switchyard, etc.) are fully enclosed within the boundary. The revised exhibit drawings do not modify the licensee's property rights under the project license.
The Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure require all intervenors filing documents with the Commission to serve a copy of that document on each person whose name appears on the official service list for the project. Further, if an intervenor files comments or documents with the Commission relating to the merits of an issue that may affect the responsibilities of a particular resource agency, it must also serve a copy of the document on that resource agency.
l. Locations of the Application: The Commission provides all interested persons an opportunity to view and/or print the contents of this document via the Internet through the Commission's website at http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/elibrary.asp. Enter the docket number (i.e., P-2662-037) in the docket number field to access the document. You may also register online at http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp to be notified via email of new filings and issuances related to this or other pending projects. Copies of the filing can be obtained directly from the applicant. For assistance, call toll-free 1-866-208-3676 or e-mail FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov. For TTY, call (202) 502-8659.
m. Individuals desiring to be included on the Commission's mailing list should so indicate by writing to the Secretary of the Commission.
n. Comments, Protests, or Motions to Intervene: Anyone may submit comments, a protest, or a motion to intervene in accordance with the requirements of Rules of Practice and Procedure, 18 CFR 385.210, .211, .214, respectively. In determining the appropriate action to take, the Commission will consider all protests or other comments filed, but only those who file a motion to intervene in accordance with the Commission's Rules may become a party to the proceeding. Any comments, protests, or motions to intervene must be received on or before the specified comment date for the particular application.
o. Filing and Service of Documents: Any filing must (1) bear in all capital letters the title "COMMENTS", "PROTEST", or "MOTION TO INTERVENE" as applicable; (2) set forth in the heading the name of the applicant and the project number of the application to which the filing responds; (3) furnish the name, address, and telephone number of the person commenting, protesting or intervening; and (4) otherwise comply with the requirements of 18 CFR 385.2001 through 385.2005. All comments, motions to intervene, or protests must set forth their evidentiary basis. Any filing made by an intervenor must be accompanied by proof of service on all persons listed in the service list prepared by the Commission in this proceeding, in accordance with 18 CFR 385.2010.

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.
1/8/2022 7123194

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Hartford

Notice of Remediation

BD55, LLC, 2 Vliet Farm Road, Asbury, NJ 08802 hereby gives notice pursuant to CGS §22a-134a(i) and RCSA §22a-133k-1(d) that remediation will be completed at the property located at 55 Peters Road, Bloomfield, CT 06002 (REM ID 13218) by BD55, LLC, which is the person responsible for such remediation. Contaminated soils containing extractable total petroleum hydrocarbons and poly-aromatic hydrocarbons from asphalt fragments are present in various locations at the site from fill material that was historically placed in areas that are now lawns adjacent to an industrial building. The site will be remediated by Magdol Environmental Consulting, LLC in accordance with the remediation standards by imposing a Notice of Activity and Use Limitation (NAUL) to prohibit residential use of the site. The proposed NAUL is expected to be implemented in the first quarter of 2022. Public comments may be submitted, via electronic mail or in writing, for thirty (30) days after the date of publication of this notification to, and any interested person may obtain additional information from, Magdol Environmental Consulting, LLC, 54 Thornton Road, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467, (860) 819-4032 or jmagdol.llc@gmail.com.
1/8/22 7122716

Connecticut

NOTICE OF SALE:

PURSUANT TO AN ORDER OF THE SUPERIOR COURT JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF MIDDLESEX AT MIDDLETOWN, DATED DECEMBER 14, 2021, DOCKET NUMBER MMX-CV-21-6031792-S, SUN COMMUNITIES, INC. F/K/A JENSEN'S, INC. V CAROL BLANKENSHIP,a public sale of a 1981 Burlington Mobile Manufactured Home, Identification Number M-2021-HA, owned by Carol Blankenship, shall be held at 17 Grove Terrace, a/k/a Grove Beach Community, Site 057, Westbrook, Connecticut, on January 18, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. Any person, including a lien holder or the owner of the mobile manufactured home park, may bid at the sale. THE SALE WILL EXTINGUISH ALL PREVIOUS OWNERSHIP AND LIEN RIGHTS. PLAINTIFF; BY ANDREA DUNN, ITS ATTORNEY, 250 STATE STREET, #D2, NORTH HAVEN, CT 06473, 203-248-6440, JURIS # 419633
1/7/22, 1/8/22, 1/10/22 7122892

Legal Notice
Town of Wethersfield
Planning and Zoning Commission
Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

The Wethersfield Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a virtual public hearing on Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Because of Covid-19 concerns, this will be by virtual and/or phone conferencing. Please check the Town of Wethersfield website for the live stream link prior to the meeting, to hear and be heard on the following applications:

3005-21-Z Lucas Kyriakos seeking a Special Permit in accordance with Section 5.2 (Permitted Uses) of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations for Outdoor Music/ Entertainment to amend Application No.'s 1700-10-Z, 1723-10-Z, 1857-15-Z & 1896-16-Z at 222 Main Street.

3009-21-Z Brian Couzens seeking a Special Permit in accordance with Section 3.6.B.2 (Garages) of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations to construct a garage larger than permitted at 334 Wolcott Hill Road.

3010-21-Z David Azulay seeking a Special Permit in accordance with Section 5.2 (Permitted Uses) of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations to modify Application No. 2065-20-Z at 1199 Silas Deane Highway.

Planning and Zoning Commission
Denise Bradley
Duly Authorized
Dated at Wethersfield, Connecticut, this 6th day of January 2022.
1/8/22 7123140

Connecticut

TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD
TAX COLLECTOR'S NOTICE

In accordance with section 12-145 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Tax Collector of the Town of Wethersfield hereby gives notice that the second installment of taxes on the Grand List of October 1, 2020 is due and payable on January 1, 2022. Taxes must be paid on or before February 1, 2022 to avoid interest charges. All taxes paid after February 1, 2022 will be subject to an interest charge of 1.50% per month from due date or 3% if paid in the month of February. The minimum interest charge is $2.00.

The Supplemental Motor Vehicle tax for vehicles registered between October 2, 2020 and July 31, 2021 are also due and payable January 1, 2022 per section 12-71b of the General Statutes, State of Connecticut.

FAILURE TO RECEIVE A TAX BILL SHALL NOT INVALIDATE THE TAX OR INTEREST CHARGES.

Payment of taxes shall be made at the office of the Tax Collector, Wethersfield Town Hall, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield CT., from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, or by mail to the address shown above, you may also pay online at www.wethersfieldct.com.

Please note that the Town Hall will be closed on January 3rd and January 17th.

Anyone, who has acquired real estate after October 1, 2021 and does not have a tax bill in his or her possession, should contact the tax office without delay.

Marlene Desjardins, CCMC
Tax Collector

Dated: December 9, 2021
12/27/21, 1/8, 28/22 7107235

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OBITUARIES BY TOWN

Berlin
Richard T. Legnani
Bethel
James M. Wardner
Bloomfield
John T. Murray
Enfield
Donald W. Gaskell
Hartford
John H. Grear
Matthew J. Marianella
Manchester
Angelina Flores
Paul Marte
Sharon L. Sledesky
Marlborough
Stephen D. Murray
Meriden
Ryszard Krzeszowiec
New Britain
Richard T. Legnani
Old Lyme
Eleanor Robinson
Old Saybrook
Barry Ilberman
Other Towns in CT
Ryszard Krzeszowiec
Eleanor Labier
Stephen D. Murray
Eileen Russman
Out of State
Paul Marte
Plainville
Jennie Asensio
Johnny Talley
Somers
Donald W. Gaskell
South Windsor
Barry Ilberman
Carol Toconis
Tolland
Donald W. Gaskell
Vernon
Sharon L. Sledesky
West Hartford
Pearl G. Jacobson
Joanne Pavano
Wethersfield
Matthew J. Marianella
Phyllis Murphy
Windsor
John H. Grear
John T. Murray
Windsor Locks
George Arsenault, Sr.
OUT OF STATE
Paul Marte
Block Island, RI

*** Denotes name listing only.**
Please note: not all death notices are in alphabetical order.

OBITUARIES

Gaskell, Donald W.



Donald W. 'Scurry' Gaskell of Somers, CT peacefully passed at home on January 5th, 2022 at the age of 82. He was born September 21, 1939 in Stafford, grew up in Hazardville and moved into the home he built in Somers in 1964 for him and his family.

Son of Arthur and Dorothy (Brennan) Gaskell of Enfield, CT. He was predeceased by his brother and sister in-law Richard and Edna Gaskell of Enfield. Don was known to many as an engaging storyteller, proud father & grandfather, fun loving uncle, a loyal friend to many and last but not least a caring, thoughtful and loving husband.

To those who knew Don, he was a happy, giving person who left this world a better place. His friendships spanned generations of people and he would always go the extra mile to help you out or make something better, regardless of whether he knew you.

Don was a talented and self-made craftsman who ran his own building and remodeling business for many years. He was known as a perfectionist and would only do things one way – the right way. Early in his career and 'while he was resting', he spent six years in the CT Air National Guard. Later in life, he made many friends as a member of both Ketch Hollow and Swift River Sportsman's Clubs.

From an early age he loved the outdoors. Hunting, fishing, trapping and boating were top priorities, even sometimes ahead of school. Throughout the years his ambitions grew as did his adventures. From annual hunting and fishing trips to the Allagash Wilderness/ Moosehead Lake region of Maine, to snowmobiling, alpine and water skiing, it can be said he lived life to the fullest.

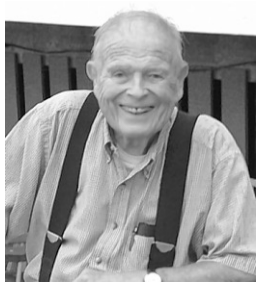
Don spent the summer of 1986 driving to Alaska with his family touring Canada on the way up and the US on the way back, only to return in 1989 to hunt Alaskan Brown Bear on Admiralty Island. In 1988 he rode his bicycle 1800 miles from CT to FL and the next year toured cross country on motorcycle. Other trips include taking his boat down the intracoastal waterway from CT to FL, a 10,000 mile motorcycle ride around the perimeter of the Continental United States, a Trans-Canada 4,300 snowmobile adventure where he ran out of snow in Alberta, Canada prior to reaching the Pacific Ocean, Elk hunting in Montana, Caribou hunting in Northern Quebec, fly fishing in Alaska, along with countless days pheasant hunting with his beloved Labrador retriever companions. To all who knew him, he will be missed.

He is survived by his wife of 54 years Marilyn (Lague) Gaskell, his three children Todd Gaskell and wife Erin of Somers, Kelley Garrison and husband Brian of Somers, Shawn Gaskell and partner Laura Lee of Tolland. He is also survived by six grandchildren, Megan, Robin and Claire Gaskell of Somers, Ella and Reily Gaskell of Tolland and Jason Garrison of Somers, brother in-law and sister in-law Alvin and Nancy Ravizza of Berlin, along with 3 nieces, 5 nephews, several cousins and loyal lab Goober.

Visitation hours will be held from 5-7 p.m. Wednesday Jan. 12, 2022 at Somers Funeral Home, 354 Main St. Somers. A Funeral Service will be held at 11 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 13, 2022 at Somers Funeral Home. Burial will be private and held at the convenience of the family. IN LIEU OF FLOWERS, donations in Don's memory may be made to the CT Humane Society, 71 Russell Road, Newington, CT 06111. For online condolences, please visit www.somersfuneralhome.com

Please sign guestbook at courant.com/obituaries

Marte, Paul



On December 20, 2021, Paul R Marte, Sr died peacefully at home, exactly as he wished, on his beloved Block Island. He was 94 years old. He is survived by Sally, his wife of 61 years, their children Paul (Matthew Alland), Peter (Rochelle), and Susan (Bryan Sweet), and grandchildren Hannah and Cooper. He is predeceased by his parents and sister Marjorie. Paul was born in 1927 in Manchester, CT to Louis & Gladys (Rising) Marte. He graduated from Manchester High School in 1945. He served in the Navy in WW II. He attended Trinity College in Hartford and then law school at Boston University. Upon completing his law degree, he started a small law firm in Manchester. He continued at that practice until his retirement when he and Sally moved full time to their home on Block Island. Paul loved his garden, his family, reading, talking, singing, church & martinis. He lived well, laughed often, and loved deeply. He will be missed by his family and his many friends. In lieu of flowers the family would appreciate donations made to the Block Island Rescue Squad or the BI Medical Center. There will be a memorial service on BI in summer 2022. Details will be provided closer to the time.

Please sign guestbook at courant.com/obituaries



Visit the obituary section on courant.com to share memories of loved ones.

OBITUARIES

Marianella, Matthew J.



Matthew Joseph Marianella, 61, of Hartford and formerly Wethersfield, passed away unexpectedly at home on Sunday, January 2, 2022. Matt was born in Hartford on February 9, 1960 and raised in Wethersfield, the son of Paul Marianella of Bloomfield and the late J. Doris (Goodin) Marianella. He was a 1978 graduate of Wethersfield High School, where he loved running Cross Country and Track. Matt worked in the restaurant business for many years, on Hilton Head Island, SC, as well as Carbone's, Chef Eugene's, and Ficara's Ristorante in the South End of Hartford. He later worked behind the meat counter for many years at D&D Market, Hartford, and most recently at West Side Market in Rocky Hill, where his customers always enjoyed his warm and friendly service. Growing up, Matt very much enjoyed golfing, learning the game from his father, with whom he enjoyed many rounds, along with his brothers and close friends. He experienced the unforgettable moment of a Hole in One during a round with his Dad at the Hunter Golf course in Meriden, a memory he and his Dad both cherished. Another passion of his was watching and rooting for his Chicago Bears ('Da Bears) on Sundays with family and friends. Most of all, Matt enjoyed his time spent with his family and many dear friends who loved him and treated him like he was family.
Along with his father Paul, Matt will be deeply missed and forever remembered by his loving family; three sisters, Mary-Alice Goot and husband Stephen of Wallingford, Paulann Marianella of East Hartford, and Lu-Anne Porcello and husband Tom of South Windsor; two brothers, Stephen Marianella and wife Marjolaine of Nellysford, VA and Thomas Marianella of Chandler, AZ and two step-brothers, Christopher Shaw of Wallingford and Gilbert Shaw of Guilford. He is also survived by three nieces, Sara Marianella Rose and Jeanette and Olivia Porcello; four nephews, Alex, Spencer, and Justin Goot and Stephen Porcello; two great- nephews and a great-niece. In addition, Matt had wonderful friends that were family to him, Frank and Kim DeFilippis, Deb and Joe DeRocher and Jim Harris. In addition to his mother, Matt was predeceased by his step-mother, Roberta Marianella.
A funeral Mass will be held on Thursday, May 12 at 10 a.m. at Christ the King Parish (Corpus Christi Church), 601 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield. Burial will follow in Rose Hill Memorial Park, Rocky Hill. Donations in Matt's memory may be made to Mikey's Place, 5 Grist Mill Road, Wethersfield, CT 06109 (online at mikeysplace.org) or to a charity of the donor's choice. Matt's funeral arrangements have been entrusted to The D'Esopo Funeral Chapel, Wethersfield. To share a memory of Matt with his family, please visit www.desopofuneralchapel.com.

D'Esopo Funeral Chapel

Please sign guestbook at courant.com/obituaries

Ilberman, Barry



Barry Ilberman 71, of South Windsor CT and formerly of Old Saybrook, NYC and West Hartford passed away on January 5th after a courageous battle with ALS. Barry leaves behind his daughter Jodi Soloperto, Christopher Soloperto and his grandchildren Emma and Jason. Barry was born in Brooklyn on February 25, 1950 to the late Morton and Gloria Ilberman and grew up with his sisters Janis and Nancy in Massapequa NY. Barry graduated from Rensselaer with a Bachelors and Masters in Nuclear Engineering and after a few years, he earned an MBA (later saying "I used to be smart"). While at RPI, Barry met Eileen Mellion. They married on June 18, 1972 and they remained together for the next 44 years until Eileen's death in 2013. After they married, Barry and Eileen settled in Connecticut where Barry worked at Northeast Utilities for the next 27 years in a variety of positions, before leaving NU as a Vice President. He then spent the next three years as Vice President of Human Resources for Sony Music before retiring to spend time with his family, travel and care for his beloved wife Eileen. Barry enjoyed his work and even more, loved the friends he met along the way and would look forward to meeting for dinners, drinks and laughs.

Barry's true joy was spending time with family, especially his grandchildren, who affectionately called him B-bar. There were family vacations to Florida, Puerto Rico, DisneyLand and Block Island. He would get excited for our vacation dinners and would often start the day by asking "Where do you want to go for dinner, I need to make a 'rezzy'". He treasured the memories he made and loved to tell the funny stories that came with them.

Later in life, Barry met Kim Blomker and they continued to have adventures near and far, enjoying time with friends and family. Together they worked through the progression of ALS with both optimism and determination.

Besides his children and grandchildren, Barry leaves behind his sisters Janis Walker and family, Nancy Gold and family, his partner Kim Blomker and many deep-loved cousins, nieces, nephews and friends.

A gravesite service will be held on 11 am this Sunday, January 9 at Rodfe Zedek Cemetery located on 24 Leesville Rd, Moodus CT. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to The Marfan Foundation and The ALS Association, Connecticut Chapter. Arrangements are entrusted to Weinstein Mortuary, West Hartford, CT. For further information or to sign the guestbook please visit www.weinsteinmortuary.com/funerals/

Barry shared that he has had a happy life and that is all he wanted for everyone else. He also wanted us to "have a great party" and, in his honor, a celebration of his life will be scheduled for early this summer.

Please sign guestbook at courant.com/obituaries

Robinson, Eleanor



"Celebratory Ecology calls each of us to spend time outdoors, to observe colors, movement, presences and absence of species, and yes, to simply enjoy the bounty. We celebrate ecology and are inspired to do all within our power to protect, and learn about this essential life-giving ecosystem."

- Eleanor Robinson at the Roger Tory Peterson Estuary Center opening, 2016.

"Celebratory Ecology calls each of us to spend time outdoors, to observe colors, movement, presences and absence of species, and yes, to simply enjoy the bounty. We celebrate ecology and are inspired to do all within our power to protect, and learn about this essential life-giving ecosystem."
- Eleanor Robinson at the Roger Tory Peterson Estuary Center opening, 2016.

Eleanor Gamble Perkins Robinson lit up the world. We mourn the death of our dear wife, mother, sister, friend, naturalist, community leader, environmental advocate, chorister, recording artist, teacher, coach, and true bright light. As her family sang "Goodnight Irene," Eleanor died January 2, 2022 peacefully at home in Old Lyme, Conn. at the mouth of the Connecticut River. Eleanor courageously battled non-smokers lung cancer for five years.

Eleanor, or Missy to her family and friends, was born October 11, 1958 to John and Eleanor Perkins and was raised in Long Island, N.Y., where her curiosity and respect for the natural world took shape. She was often found in the intertidal zones and the coastal nature preserves, studying the creatures of the water, land, and sky. Her delight and wonder for birds began on the shores of Long Island, but ultimately brought her to extreme parts of the world: the Amazon Rainforest, where she banded birds with the World Wildlife Fund; British Columbia, where she researched pelagic birds with the Natural History Museum; and the outer islands of New England and Canada, where she documented migratory bird behaviors as a resident naturalist.

From a young age, she was hungry for adventure and exploration. Alongside her older brother Brad, she spent summers in the Adirondack Mountains, climbing peaks and paddling rivers. At the age of 11, she was one of the youngest girls to summit all 46 of the high peaks over 4,000 feet, fostering a lifelong love for the mountains. Of all the woodland hikes, campfires, and nights spent under the stars throughout her life, she was most proud of the 14,411-foot ascent up Mount Rainier in 2009 with the American Lung Association, to honor her brother Brad, who died of brain cancer in 2008.

Eleanor's professional life was driven by an unwavering passion for the wonders of the natural world. She met her lifelong mentor, noted conservationist Thomas Lovejoy, while receiving a B.S. in botany and zoology at the University of Washington. This launched a career in conservation and advocacy, sending her at young age to work Peru and Brazil, Woods Hole, Boston University – where she received her Master's in Scientific Journalism – and then Washington, D.C. in the 1990s. A prolific writer and resolute environmentalist, she was at the helm of campaigns for the Smithsonian Institute and World Wildlife Fund, introducing the public to the then-fledgling matter of "climate change." Her dedication spread from the halls of the Capitol into teaching middle- and high school classrooms, where she shared her natural curiosity with young and inspiring minds.

After moving to Old Lyme in 2012, she found herself in the ecological hotspot of the Connecticut River Estuary, which she deemed to be the Amazon Delta of the East Coast. It became her final classroom. In honor of the renowned ornithologist, artist, educator, and former resident of Old Lyme, Roger Tory Peterson, she founded an Audubon Center in Old Lyme, a pilot environmental education program that began out of the trunk of her green Mini Cooper. With no physical center yet established, she hauled teaching materials including maps, microscopes, and binoculars that dangled from the headrest. Today, the Roger Tory Peterson Estuary Center is a thriving STEM institution serving 15 area towns and the city of New London. Its educational programs reach more than 4,000 children and families annually.

At the center of her life was her family. Her husband, Mark K. J. Robinson first spotted her at the Head of the Charles Regatta in Boston, MA, where she worked as the Director of Media Relations at Massachusetts Audubon Society. Mark's "Newfy sweater," a garment iconic and endemic to Newfoundland, caught her attention. They bonded over time spent in northeastern Canada; Mark doing missionary work and Eleanor teaching at the Quebec Labrador Foundation. Over 35 years of marriage, they raised three daughters on the Calvary Church campus in Stonington, Conn., where Mark was the Rector. Together, they founded the Calvary Church Nursery and Calvary Music schools and traveled the world, making homes in South Africa, Uganda, Washington, D.C., Ohio, and Connecticut.

Eleanor overflowed with creative energy and a love for movin', groovin', and making music. From her childhood to her final vacation in Park City, Utah this past Christmas, she carried her ukulele in tow. While at Miss Porter's School ('76) she arranged music and sang in the acapella group and throughout her life, continued to pen songs, limericks, and ditties that brought the young and the old together. Her music filled church halls, community centers, living rooms, and backyards, where her second soprano voice could be heard in choirs, bands and ensembles. While raising three young girls, she launched "Sweet Beats," a business which inspired intergenerational music and movement making for babies, children and families. In true Eleanor spirit, when she tore her ACL coaching lacrosse, she spent her recovery writing and recording two albums of original songs for singing families (available under "Eleanor Robinson" on Spotify, Amazon and iTunes).

Eleanor would often say she lived a hundred lives. That might have been an underestimate. We remember her for her vibrant spirit, humor, love, and light. We are called to action by her vision for harmony between people and their environment. And we commit to the completion of the legacy she left.

In the words of her friend and fellow environmentalist, "As I sit overlooking Great Island on the Connecticut River Estuary, I think of Eleanor's love of this little piece of nature – her encyclopedic knowledge of everything from butterflies to ospreys; her profound reverence for the land and the regenerative cycles of spring, summer, fall, and winter... We have lost a great champion of life and nature – but she has endowed [us] not just with wonderful memories and wisdom, but perhaps more importantly she leaves [us] with a set of impossibly high standards to follow – on how to live life to the fullest, how to face adversity with unimaginable courage, and how to spread joy with all you meet."

Eleanor was predeceased by brother, Bradford Perkins of Seattle, Wash. and her father John Perkins of Essex, Conn. She is survived by her husband, The Rev. Canon Mark K.J. Robinson; her daughters Sewell, Frances, and Florence; her son-in-law Sam Bourneuf; Sewell and Sam's daughter Eleanor "Ebbie"; her mother Eleanor Perkins; and her brother John Perkins.

A private burial service will take place with her family next week and a celebration for the public will take place Saturday, April 23, 2021 at 2:00 pm at St. James Episcopal Church in New London, CT. In lieu of flowers, please make donations in memory of Eleanor to Connecticut Audubon - Roger Tory Peterson Estuary Center (https://www.ctaudubon.org/rtpecdonate/).

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OBITUARIES

Murray, Stephen D.



Stephen Douglas Murray, formerly of Marlborough and Stafford Springs, Connecticut, passed away on December 28, 2021, after a long battle with Parkinson's Disease. He was 59.

Steve was born in Concord, MA to Kenneth and Susan (Otto) Murray and graduated from Nashoba Regional High School in 1980. After earning his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Boston University in 1984, he settled with his young family in Connecticut to work for Pratt & Whitney in East Hartford. During his career, Steve contributed as an inventor on multiple patents.

Steve was a man of countless interests, who preferred to be outdoors. He enjoyed coaching his childrens' sports teams; hiking; playing the guitar; and tinkering with anything mechanical. In retirement, he became a Certified Master Gardener and practiced yoga. He loved hunting and fishing in Vermont, his favorite place on earth.

In addition to his mother, Steve leaves behind three children: Rachael (Keshav) Strogoff; Heather Rossitto; and Michael (Emanuele) Murray; their mother Rebecca Murray; and grandchildren Masho, Avery, Redeit and Mya. He also leaves behind siblings Beth (Brian) Pallotta, Russell (Paula) Murray, Kevin (Brook) Murray, John (Tanya) Frazier, Heather (Donat) Premont, Debbie Hickory, and Adam Murray. "Stevie" was a beloved member of a large clan of Murray cousins, including his partner in crime Bobby of South Windsor, and a mischievous and fun uncle to many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his father and his stepmother, Margaret Murray.

The family will be holding a memorial event at 12:30 pm on January 30, 2022 at the American Legion in Vernon, CT. In lieu of flowers, donations in Steve's memory may be made to the Parkinson's Foundation, www.parkinson.org.

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Asensio, Jennie Palumbo



Jennie (Palumbo) Asensio, 93, of Plainville, beloved wife of the late Alfonso Asensio, passed away peacefully on Monday January 3, 2022.
The daughter of the late Mary (Palumbo) and John Palumbo, Jennie spent her early years in New Britain before settling with her husband in Plainville where she worked full time while raising her family.
Jennie's greatest joy was being a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, and she relished in hearing everything going on in the lives of her family. Jennie also loved to entertain her many family members and friends. Her home was always full of the smells from her love of cooking and the sounds of her laughter and was the gathering place where many memorable times with family and friends were shared; from holiday parties to setback games, the great times were plentiful and will be forever cherished. Her laughter will forever be remembered in the many lives she touched.
She leaves her two sons, Richard and his partner, Chau Nguyen of CA and Robert and Susan of MA; her grandchildren, Lauren (Chris) Demake, Jill (Thomas) Olsen, and Robert Asensio; her great-grandchildren, Dominic, William, Renee, and Anna. She is also survived by many relatives that held a special place in her heart, including her niece Joni Hamel and her cousin Josephine Bianca. In addition to her husband of 68 years, she was predeceased by her beloved sisters, Rose Greco Forgione and Caroline Mascarucci, as well as her dear friends Bonnie Higgins and Roberta Bosco.
The family would like to acknowledge the wonderful loving care she received from Candida Gomes, and the teams at Anthology of Farmington, and Trinity Hospice. In lieu of flowers, Jennie may be remembered with contributions to the Trinity Healthcare Hospice at www.trinityhealthathome.org
A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Monday January 10, 2022 at 11:00 a.m. at Our Lady of Mercy Church, 94 Broad St, Plainville. Committal will follow at St. Joseph Cemetery. The staff at Plainville Funeral Home extends their gratitude to the Asensio family for their trust. For online expressions of sympathy and livestream of the funeral Mass, please visit Jennie's tribute page at www.PlainvilleFuneralHome.com

PLAINVILLE FUNERAL HOME

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Sledesky, Sharon L.



Sharon Lee (Magnotta) Sledesky, 67, of Vernon, died unexpectedly on Friday December 31, 2021, at John Dempsey Hospital in Farmington. She was born on February 3, 1954, in Hartford, CT, daughter of the late Thomas P. and Maryann (Tonski) Magnotta. Sharon grew up in Manchester and was a graduate of East Catholic High School class of 1972. She began working at a print shop called Electrocal where she met her first husband, Allan Borek, they married in 1974 and had two daughters. Sharon later went to work for Northeast Utilities in the late 1980's as a meter reader, where she met and would later marry her second husband, Marc Sledesky, in 1989, with whom she had a son. She later went on to work at the UCONN Medical Center in Farmington in medical records, where she had been employed for the past 20 years. Sharon was planning her retirement for April of this year when she was looking forward to living a bi-coastal lifestyle. She loved to go on cruises and spend time with her family. It did not matter the destination she just enjoyed being on the ship, or at the slots. Sharon had many hobbies including scoping out the best spot at Misquamicut Beach, roller skating, dancing, bowling and reading. Most recently she was very proud to have achieved the title of Level 47 Pokémon Trainer. She leaves behind her aforementioned children, Tina Lazzaris and her husband Jeff of Preston, Amanda Borek of Manchester, and Tommy Sledesky and his husband Dan Sciarra of San Francisco, CA; her brothers, William Magnotta and his wife Lorraine of Vernon, and Robert Magnotta and his wife Janet of Manchester along with numerous nieces and nephews. She also leaves her two cats and grand dogs whom she adored, Abby, Minnie, Sophie, Leo, and Opie. Her family will receive friends for calling hours on Wednesday, January 12, 2022, from 4-6 p.m., at the Samsel & Carmon Funeral Home, 419 Buckland Rd., South Windsor. A time of sharing will be held at 6pm and Sharon's family encourages anyone who wishes to share a memory, prayer or story to do so. In lieu of flowers memorial donations in Sharon's memory may be made to the Lymphoma Research Foundation. For online condolence please visit www.carmonfuneralhome.com

CARMON Community Funeral Homes

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Pavano, Joanne (Nardi)



Joanne (Nardi) Pavano (73) passed away peacefully on January 6, 2022, surrounded by her husband and children at St. Francis Hospital. She was the wife of Gerald J. Pavano. The two shared 50 years of loving marriage together.

Joanne was born in Hartford, CT on August 22, 1948. She was the daughter of Angelo and Mary Nardi. Joanne graduated from Conard High School, then graduated from Southern New Hampshire University in 1970. She was employed at the Travelers Insurance Company for twenty years.

Joanne enjoyed hobbies such as reading, getting her nails and hair done, and watching films. She thought her time was best spent surrounded by her family, laughing around the dinner table for hours after the meal was finished. She will be remembered for her beauty, delightful laugh, inappropriate humor, and love for her family.

Joanne is survived by her husband Gerald; son Jeffery and wife Denise, daughter Jill and husband Chris; grandchildren Joshua, Emily, Jackson, Lily, and Lucas; brothers Richard, Robert and Lawrence Nardi; pets Hannah, Molly and Vader. She was predeceased by her sister Teresa Nardi and parents Angelo and Mary Nardi.

Visitation will be from 5:00-7:00 pm on Monday, January 10, 2022 at the Sheehan-Hilborn-Breen Funeral Home, 1084 New Britain Avenue, West Hartford, CT. Funeral Services will be held at a later date in a private ceremony for the family.

In lieu of flowers, her family is requesting that donations be made to the American Diabetes Association at https://diabetes.org or Protectors of Animals at https://poainc.org/donate/ Online condolences may be made at www.SheehanHilbornBreen.com

Sheehan Hilborn Breen FUNERAL HOME

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Toconis, Carol (Lawson)



Carol (Lawson) Toconis, 96, of South Windsor, beloved wife of the late Edward S Toconis died unexpectedly on Monday, December 20, 2021, at home. She was born in New York City on July 28, 1925, daughter to the late Thomas William and Hattie (Emmons) Lawson. Carol grew up in Flushing, NY on 171 Street. She was a graduate of Bayside High School and PS109. Carol went on to study nursing in Virginia and completed her internship at the Institute of Living in Hartford. She was married for 54 years to Edward S. Toconis. They settled in South Windsor where they raised a family. She worked at the Institute of Living where she specialized in psychiatric nursing care and later went to work for several local convalescent homes where she focused on senior long term nursing care. Carol dedicated her life as an advocate for and caregiver for her son Stephen who was involved with MARC in Manchester starting in the late 1950's. She enjoyed singing with the Hartford Symphony Chorale and was an avid golfer and enjoyed playing at courses all over New England and at Beau Rivage in North Carolina. Carol had the opportunity to travel extensively throughout the years, but especially enjoyed spending summers with her family in Matunuck, RI, and Southold, NY, as well as Carolina Beach in North Carolina. Carol loved her family. This was displayed by her generosity and concern at all times. She loved nature, gardening, the beach, and spending time outdoors. She leaves her sons, John Toconis and his wife Deborah of Vernon, and Todd Toconis and his wife Anna of Gilbert, SC; her grandchildren, Aja Garner and her husband Charles of Vernon, Lea Toconis of Vernon, and John Toconis of Vernon; her great grandchildren, Olivia Garner and Lucy Powers both of Vernon. She also leaves four devoted nieces, Beth Seng, Melanie Steilen-Kaplan, Margo Pinto, and Susan McKenna. She was predeceased by her son, Stephen A. Toconis and her sisters, Gloria Steilen and Joyce Wendlek. Funeral services are private at the request of her family. Samsel & Carmon Funeral Home in South Windsor has care of the arrangements. In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made to MARC Inc., of Manchester, 151 Sheldon Rd., Manchester, CT 06042. For online condolences please visit www.carmonfuneralhome.com

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Russman, Eileen



Eileen Ruth Pollack Russman passed away on January 5, 2022, at the age of 90, surrounded by her loving family. Eileen is survived by her two sons, Eric Russman and his wife Sherry (Walsh) of Southington, CT, and David Russman and his wife Ragan Willis of Wenham, MA. Eileen ("Grandma Leenie") doted on and was greatly loved by her three grandchildren, Amanda, Benjamin, and Sage Russman.
Eileen is also survived by her brother and sister-in-law Ivan and Carlyn Pollack of Parkland, FL, special cousin Marjie Wolfe of Hamden, CT, and several nieces and nephews.
Born in New Haven, CT on August 8, 1931, Eileen was the daughter of Elizabeth Gillette and George Pollack. She was raised in Brooklyn, NY and graduated from Lafayette High School in 1949 and Grace New Haven School of Nursing in 1952. Eileen was a registered nurse at Grace New Haven Hospital, Connecticut Valley Hospital, Undercliff, and Meriden Wallingford Hospital before retiring as the Assistant Director of Nursing at Miller Memorial Community in Meriden, CT.
Eileen enjoyed traveling and visited many countries around the world. She made friends easily, and kept in touch with many of them for more than 50 years. Eileen was always up for a party, and was the first to arrive and last to leave. She was a constant presence at her grandchildren's school events, and never forgot a friend's or family member's birthday. Eileen also loved playing mahjong with her friends, and lunches out with the girls.
Eileen had a tremendous amount of spirit and determination and, to her doctors' amazement, recovered from cancer several times during her life. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.
A Private graveside service will be held at B'nai Jacob Memorial Park, 200 Wintergreen Ave, New Haven, CT, on Monday, January 10, 2022. The family will sit Shiva at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Hartford Healthcare Cancer Institute at Midstate Medical Center in Meriden, CT. The Robert E. Shure & Son Funeral Home, New Haven is in care of Arrangements. To sign an online registry book, leave a message of condolence, or watch the service live, please visit www.shurefuneralhome.com.

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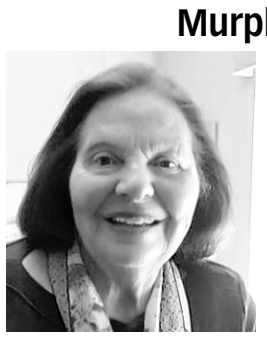
Jacobson, Pearl G



Pearl (Ginsberg) Jacobson daughter of the late Dora and Samuel Ginsberg ,94, passed away peacefully in her home on January 6th.
Pearl was born in Rockville, CT and was raised with her three siblings, Lillian, Jesse and Rosetta in the North End of Hartford. Pearl graduated from Weaver High School, Class of 1944. She continued her education at Hillyer Junior College, where she met the love of her life, Jack. She received her BA from St Joseph College and her MA from the University of Hartford. Pearl was a teacher in the West Hartford School System for 35 years. Pearl was proud of her career and was well respected by her students and their parents. After her retirement Pearl enjoyed her weekly Bible Discussion Group, volunteered for the Hartford Jewish Coalition for Literacy and she enjoyed her role as "Granny Nanny" together with Marjie babysitting for Marjie and Beny's grandchildren.
Pearl and Jack shared 62 years of a beautiful marriage together with many travels and enjoyed sharing their home for happy celebrations. Jack passed away in October 2010 and Pearl often reminisced of their years together.
Safta Pearl leaves her adoring children, grandchildren and great grandchildren:
Marjie and Beny Zivyon, Dorit and Jeff Dahan, Abby, Tal, Lia and Maya, Ari and Vicki Zivyon, Jack and Jordan, David and Sandra Jacobson, Jonathan and Rebecca Jacobson, Ellie and Taylor, Joseph and Melissa Jacobson, Lilly and Mia and Daniel Jacobson.
Aunt Pearl leaves devoted nieces and nephew and appreciated her great-nephew Jonathan's Shabbat visits.
The McClean Hospice provided care and their support is so appreciated.
The family praises the caring, compassion and kindness of her team of caregivers Anne Marie, Annie, Fidelis and her long time helper Ann. These wonderful women are exemplary and cared for Pearl like their own relative.
To honor Safta Pearl's legacy, read to a child, visit an elderly friend or relative and enjoy the beauty of Elizabeth Park.
A family graveside service led by Rabbi Yitzchok Adler will be on Sunday, January 9th.
The family will be observing a private Shiva.
Memorial Donations in Pearl's memory made be made to Rabbi's Discretionary Fund c/o Beth David Synagogue 20 Dover Rd. West Hartford, CT 06119 or to
AFMDA (American Friends of Magen David Adom) 20 W. 36th St. Suite 1100 New York, NY 10018

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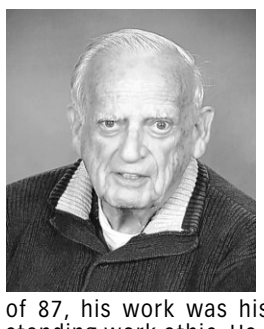
Murphy, Phyllis



Phyllis Murphy, 89 (formerly of Wethersfield, CT) died peacefully at her home in Canton MA on January 4, 2022. She was the beloved wife of the late Robert J. Murphy and daughter of Amelia (Coppy) and Harry Mellon. She was predeceased by her three siblings.
Phyllis was a graduate of Drexel University and Central Connecticut State University. Her career began as a public school teacher in Madison and Bloomfield Connecticut, then as a teacher and principal of Corpus Christi School (Wethersfield, CT) and later as an administrator for the Archdiocese of Hartford Office of Catholic Schools.
Phyllis is survived by her daughters, Marguerite Murphy and her husband Samuel Solomon and Katherine Buhler and her husband Philipp Buhler and five grandchildren. Phyllis's happiest moments were when she was with her family.
She was a member of the Wethersfield Art League, Wethersfield Historical Society, volunteered for State of Connecticut Services for the Blind, a guide at the Connecticut State Capitol, ESL tutor and a past member of the Wethersfield Library Board and numerous other organizations.
Our family is grateful for the wonderful care provided by her caregivers Donna Nicholas and Fedia Lafortune as well as Laerte Giraud and the entire staff of Cornerstone at Canton.
In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in her memory to Old Colony Hospice (321 Manley Street, West Bridgewater, MA 02379), to Corpus Christi School Annual Fund (581 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield CT 06109), or to a charity of your choice.
Private service will be held at Farley Funeral Home 355 Park Street Stoughton MA, private interment at Rose Hill Memorial Park, Rocky Hill CT.

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Murray, John Taylor



John Taylor Murray age 94 of Bloomfield beloved husband of the late Elinor (Devanney) Murray was called home to join his heavenly savior on Tuesday, January 4, 2022. He was born on September 1, 1927, in Hartford, one of two sons to the late John and Grace Murray. John was an electrician for many years until his retirement at the age of 87, his work was his passion, and he had an outstanding work ethic. He was a member of the Electrical Workers Local 35 and a member of the National Electrical Contractors. John was a communicant of Sacred Heart Church in Bloomfield, he spent countless hours volunteering for numerous church activities.

John enjoyed camping especially at Roaring Brook Campground in Stafford where he and his family vacationed for over thirty years. He was an avid dog lover. His kind and helpful spirit will be greatly missed.

John is survived by his three children, Kevin Thomas Murray and his wife Monika, Mary Frances Murray, and Margaret Hamlin and her husband Glenn; two grandchildren, Jessica and Justin Hamlin. He was predeceased by a brother, William Murray.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Monday, January 10, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. at Sacred Heart Church, 26 Wintonbury Ave., Bloomfield, CT. A visitation will be held prior to the mass from 9:00 to 9:45a.m. at the church. Burial will be private in Rose Hill Memorial Park. In lieu of flowers memorial donations in John's memory may be made to American Diabetes Association and Sacred Heart Church. For online expressions of sympathy please visit, at www.carmonfuneralhome.com.

CARMON Community Funeral Homes

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Share memories, express condolences, and celebrate life in the obituary section on courant.com.

OBITUARIES

Grear, John H.



John H. Grear, 70, passed away December 16, 2021, surrounded by family. He was born February 28, 1951, in Richland, GA, to the late Henry and Eloise (Pollard) Grier.
John worked for Pratt and Whitney for 40 years before retiring.
In addition to his parents, John was predeceased by his sister Ollie. He is survived by sisters Gladys, Ann, Leola, Pauline, Gloria, and Angela; brothers Donner, David, Wille Earl; a host of in-laws, nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

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Legnani, Richard T



Richard T. Legnani, 86, of New Britain, passed away on Wednesday, December 15, 2021. Born in New Britain, he was the son of the late Anthony and Elizabeth (Ferony) Legnani. Richie grew up in Berlin, attended local schools and served in the Army. Richie enjoyed daily card games with his brother Anthony and friends, UConn basketball and visits with family. Richie is survived by his sons Rick, Ron, Rod, Roger, Rob, Tom, Stephen and daughter Jennifer. He leaves several grandchildren and great grandchildren. Richie is survived by his brothers Anthony and Robert, and predeceased by his son Rusty and sister Caroline. Friends and family are invited to celebrate Richie's life with a Mass of Christian Burial on Saturday, February 5 at 10:00 a.m. at St. Paul Church, 461 Alling St., Kensington, Ct.

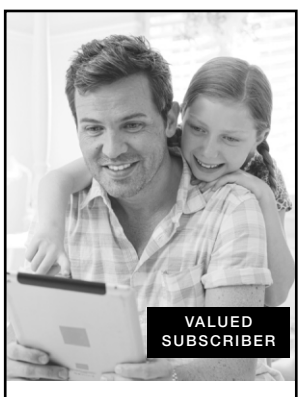
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Wardner, James M.

James Marshall Wardner, 78, of Bethel, passed away on Wednesday (December 15, 2021) at St. John Paul II Center in Danbury. He was born in Hartford on January 27, 1943 a son of the late Rupert C. and Fannie (Cohen) Wardner. James was a longtime employee of Frances Cleaners, where he was a professional spotter and dry cleaner. Jimmy was a gentle soul with a great love for animals, especially Beamer the chihuahua. He could often be found spending time out on the patio watching all the wildlife in the yard. He enjoyed watching Clint Eastwood movies, NASCAR racing, tinkering with radios and taking long drives.
He leaves behind a sister, Laura Wardner of Cromwell and several cousins. He also leaves his close friends, Molly and Richard Maltas and their son Devin of Bethel; Besides his parents, James was predeceased by his brother, Richard Wardner; a half sister; and several aunts and uncles.
A graveside service will be held on Tuesday (January 11, 2022) at 11 AM in the Rose Hill Memorial Park, 580 Elm St., Rocky Hill. Please share online expressions of sympathy, memories, or photo tributes at www.rose-hillfuneralhomes.com.

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Hartford Courant
CONNECTICUT
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CORONAVIRUS IN CONNECTICUT

Virus in prisons 'just out of control'

As omicron variant spreads statewide, cases are ticking up among incarcerated, corrections staff

By Kelan Lyons
CT Mirror

After a year-and-a-half of the pandemic working its way through the state's prisons and jails, COVID-19 had slowed down in the corrections system by the beginning of September. Fewer inmates were being sent to the medical isolation unit at MacDougall-Walker Correctional Institution, infection rates among the incarcerated population were falling and no one had died since Jan. 25.

As fall transitioned to winter, four incarcerated people died from the virus. Infection rates ticked up as vaccinations remained low among the incarcerated and corrections staff.

"Now, the MacDougall coronavirus unit is packed-jammed, and they had to open up a second one," said Ellen Durko, a registered nurse who works in the prison system. "It's just out of control. I can't even fathom how it's gotten this bad, except for the variant."

As the rest of the state weathers a spike in cases due to the omicron variant, the correction system is in the throes of another COVID outbreak.

Of the 9,468 people in state prisons and jails on Jan. 5, 417 were reported COVID-positive and asymptomatic, while 197 were showing symptoms.

The outbreak isn't just confined to the incarcerated; 896 Department of Correction staff were COVID-positive as of Jan. 5, causing staff shortages and exacerbating already low morale among state employees exhausted from working in the prison system for the past two years during the pandemic.

Turn to Prisons, Page 2



Nearly 900 employees of Connecticut's Department of Correction are out of work with COVID-19 as of this week. **COURANT FILE**



The Hartford Financial Services Group had planned to bring workers back to the office in a hybrid model beginning Jan. 18. **MARK MIRKO/HARTFORD COURANT**

Return to office pushed back as infections spike

The Hartford's plans to bring thousands back now on hold indefinitely

By Kenneth R. Gosselin
Hartford Courant

HARTFORD — The Hartford Financial Services Group, which employs thousands at its corporate headquarters in Hartford's Asylum Hill, said Friday that it was delaying a broad-based return of its workforce to the office, the latest major employer in the city raising concerns about the recent surge in the coronavirus.

The insurance giant had expected to start bringing employees back to the office on Jan. 18, but now says it will put that off indefinitely and reassess the situation in February.

Spokesman Matthew Sturdevant said the decision came after The Hartford had analyzed spiking COVID-19 infections and the fast-spreading omicron variant.

"Employee health and safety continues to guide our decisions as we work through this dynamic situation," Sturdevant said, in a statement. "While there is no perfect time to activate our new work model, our intention is to do it as soon as health trends support larger numbers of employees coming together safely for meaningful interaction."

The insurer's new work model has two components. Employees who worked remotely before the pandemic will continue that arrangement. Those who worked in the office full-time will move to a hybrid model, splitting time between home and office.

The Hartford joins a growing list of big employers in and around Hartford who have pushed back employee return dates, a blow to shops and restaurants that count on the business from those employees.

Two weeks ago, Travelers Cos., which employs thousands downtown, told employees that it was delaying indefinitely its broad-based return to the office.

The insurer also had targeted Jan. 18.

Travelers had pushed back its return to office date a couple of times through late summer and into the fall amid infection surges from the delta and omicron variants.

CVS Health Corp., which owns Hartford-based health insurer Aetna, has made a similar decision to push back a wholesale return of office workers in a hybrid model of two or three days a week originally set for Jan. 10. CVS said it is monitoring the situation but has not set a new date.

The pandemic already is dramatically reshaping the workplace at employers such as jet engine maker Pratt & Whitney.

Pratt says it plans to make working from home permanent for thousands of salaried workers at its East Hartford headquarters, with access to meeting space when needed.

Kenneth R. Gosselin can be reached at kgosselin @courant.com.

CSCU holds off on going remote

Spring semester will continue as scheduled with in-person classes

By Adria Watson
CT Mirror

As multiple colleges and universities around Connecticut moved classes online and delayed students' return to campus for the spring semester due to a recent rise in COVID-19 cases, the Connecticut State Colleges and University system announced that it will begin the spring 2022 semester as originally scheduled.

State university students will move into residence halls as scheduled on Jan. 17 and 18, and in-person classes will start on Jan. 19.

In-person classes at the community colleges will also resume as scheduled on Jan. 21.

Face masks will also continue to be required while indoors on campuses, and vaccine requirements also remain in place — CSCU officials highly encourage boosters but have not required them at this time.

"In conferring with Academic Affairs leadership, we understand that pivoting to online or hybrid classes for a couple of weeks and then pivoting back to on-ground classes would be challenging to both faculty and students," said Zulma Toro, Central Connecticut State University president, in an email sent out to students and staff on campus about the decision. "It also could add to the anxiety that many of our family members are experiencing these days. Therefore, classes will maintain their previously designated modality."

As COVID-19 cases in Connecticut steadily increased over the last month, several colleges and universities throughout the state decided to make changes heading into the spring semester for students and faculty returning after the

Turn to CSCU, Page 2

St. Luke's boys hockey player dies after in-game collision

'Community is mourning' after 10th grader was injured on the ice during game in Greenwich

By Lori Riley
Hartford Courant

A St. Luke's boys hockey player died after sustaining an injury to his neck during a junior varsity game at the Brunswick School in Greenwich on Thursday afternoon, according to Greenwich police and school officials.

St. Luke's, which is in New Canaan, identified the player as 10th grader Teddy Balkind on Friday.

"During the normal course of the game, a player from the other team [St. Luke's] fell to the ice," Greenwich Capt. Mark Zuccerella said in a statement. "Another player who was near the downed player was unable to stop and collided with the player who fell.

"The player on the ice sustained an injury. Game play was stopped and 911 was called. The player was transported to Greenwich Hospital. The student player died as a result of the injury."

Zuccerella added that the police department had nothing further to report Friday.

"Our community is mourning," St. Luke's head of school Mark Davis said in a statement. "Yesterday, we lost a precious young man in a tragic accident. Both St. Luke's School and Brunswick School are in shock as we work to support our students and families. St. Luke's singular focus at this moment is to care for our devastated community."

Brunswick Head of School Thomas Philip said in a statement that Balkind suffered a cut to his neck. He said those who were at the game described the play as "entirely normal and unremarkable in the game of hockey."

"I want to commend our medical, coaching and security staff for all that they did in the most terrible of circumstances to sustain the boy until the ambulance arrived," Philip wrote.

"We are saddened beyond words," Philip added in an earlier statement. "Our thoughts and prayers are with the family of the boy, the players and coaches on both teams, the entirety of the St Luke's School community, and our own students and families. Tragedies such as this are hard to process and impossible to understand. We will do all we can in the coming days and weeks to help and support those in our community and in the St Luke's community. We ask that everyone say a prayer for the boy, his family, and all those impacted by this horrible accident."

The CIAC also extended condolences to the family and the school via Twitter.

"The CIAC extends its heartfelt condolences to the family of the St. Luke's hockey player and the St. Luke's community for their tragic loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with all impacted by this tragedy."

Hockey Hall of Famer Martin St. Louis, who lives in Greenwich and had sons who played at Brunswick, offered his condolences.

"My thoughts and prayers are with Teddy's family, teammates, friends and everyone impacted by this tragedy," St. Louis said on Twitter.

The New Canaan High School hockey team also posted a tribute to Balkind on Twitter.

"We woke up this morning with the heaviest hearts after hearing of the tragic loss of one of New Canaan's own. Teddy was a wonderful young man, always smiling, a terrific teammate. No words are adequate for the grief we are all feeling."

Information from Associated Press was used in this report.

Lori Riley can be reached at lriley@courant.com.

CONNECTICUT

New Britain man charged in Glastonbury car-burglary spree

By Jesse Leavenworth
Hartford Courant

Glastonbury police arrested a New Britain man Thursday on charges connected to a car-burglary spree in November.

Marquees Rodriguez, 18, faces charges that include burglary, larceny, theft of a credit card and illegal use of a credit card. Rodriguez also faces several charges in other area towns, Glastonbury police spokesman Lt. Corey Davis said Friday.

Car burglaries by a crew of thieves prompted multiple calls to police on Nov. 15.

The thefts involved a gray Infiniti sedan stolen from Bloomfield, Davis said.

The thieves also made multiple fraudulent charges on credit cards stolen from a woman's vehicle parked at the end of a walking trail at 206 House St., Davis said.

Later that day, police spotted the Infiniti in Hartford, but the driver, later identified as Rodriguez, eluded capture, Davis said.

The vehicle was recovered the next day in West Hartford, and on Nov. 23, Rodriguez was apprehended in Hartford in another stolen vehicle by members of the Greater Hartford Regional Auto Theft Task Force, Davis said.

Hartford police arrested him on charges of possession of a stolen vehicle, a stolen handgun and a high capacity magazine, Davis said.

Davis said the arrest in Glastonbury was made possible "by outstanding inter-agency cooperative efforts."

Jesse Leavenworth can be reached at jleavenworth@courant.com

Prisons

from Page 1

Durko is one of the almost 900 DOC employees out of work with COVID-19. Corrections staff are tested for COVID-19 every week. Those who test positive, regardless of vaccination status, are out of work for five days, after which they can return if they don't have symptoms.

Healthy staff are left to fill in for their sick colleagues. Fresh off working four 16-hour shifts in four days, Sean Howard, the president of AFSCME Local 387 who is stationed at Cheshire Correctional Institution, said he and his peers are tired and overworked, constantly getting mandated to work overtime.

"Staff morale right now couldn't be any lower inside the facilities," Howard said.

Having eight hours free between shifts doesn't mean corrections officers sleep that whole time, said Robert Beamon, a member of Local 391 and a CO at Carl Robinson Correctional Institution. They have to drive home, interact with their family, maybe have a meal before they go to bed.

"You have sometimes you have people working an entire week or two with only four to five hours of sleep a day," Beamon said. "And then they expect you to be vigilant and be able to watch the inmate population in an effective manner."

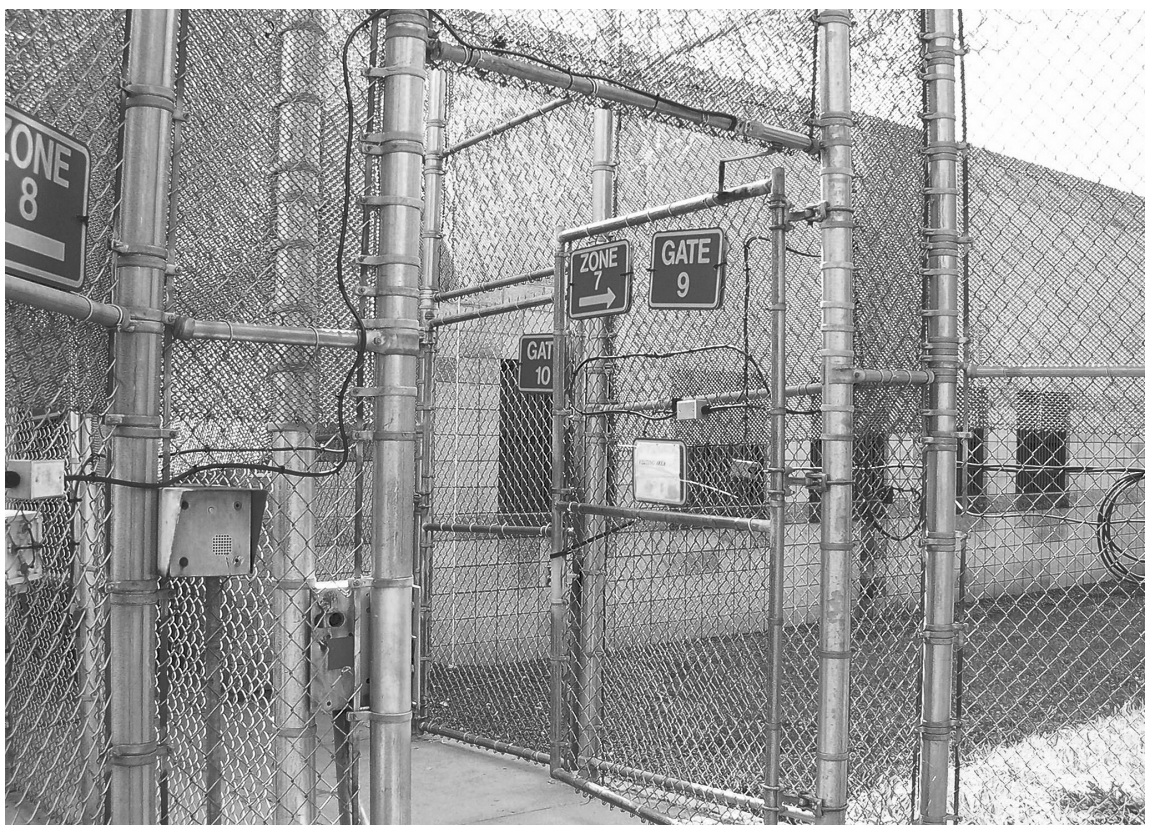
Corrections union officials identified several changes they say would improve working conditions. Collin Provost, the president of AFSCME Local 391 who works at MacDougall-Walker, said hiring more employees and increasing opportunities for training are key.

"Because we've been so low on staffing levels, I think that training has taken a major back seat," said Provost.

Staff could use training on exercising restraints to protect employees or other incarcerated people, how to recognize warning signs that could lead to violence and how to de-escalate situations involving prisoners who won't comply with orders, Provost said.

Durko worked at Northern Correctional Institution earlier in the pandemic, when the DOC would send sick prisoners there. She acknowledges that incarcerated people would hide symptoms to avoid being sent to the supermax Somers prison, but she said the ventilation there was better than at MacDougall-Walker. She suggested temporarily reopening Northern, to utilize its space.

Reopening Northern would draw the ire of advocates who fought for its closure for years because of the prolonged use of solitary confinement there.



About 60% of Department of Correction staff and about 52% of people in prisons and jails are vaccinated against COVID-19. **COURANT FILE PHOTO**

"I think that would be the most disastrous thing in Connecticut in response to COVID-19," said Barbara Fair, a longtime activist and the "mother of the movement" to end solitary confinement in Connecticut. "That place should never, ever have been built and shouldn't be used for anything else."

Low vaccination rates: The Department of Correction offers vaccinations and boosters when people enter the prison system. The incarcerated can also request a shot.

"With the growing cases of COVID-19, the Department of Correction remains attentive to the impact on our staff and those in our custody," said Ashley McCarthy, the DOC's director of external affairs. "We maintain our commitment to health and safety by ensuring access to vaccinations, booster shots, a continuous cleaning routine, continuous masking and a rigorous testing schedule. These efforts have proven to be effective for those who reside in our facilities, evidenced by a positivity rate well below that of the community."

About 60% of DOC staff are vaccinated. As of Nov. 22, the Department of Correction had the lowest vaccination rate among executive branch employees, at 65%.

"Personally, I know a handful of people that were double vaccinated and boosted and still got COVID," said Michael Vargo, the president of AFSCME Local 1565 who works at York Correctional Institution. "So, the governor's mandate, we followed it to a T, and it's up to the staff to do what they want to do, in my opinion."

At this point, Provost said, testing is more important than vaccination because of the frequency of breakthrough cases.

"Vaccination doesn't mean that you're not going to be able to get the virus and still pass it on to an inmate. So it's best that we continue to do weekly testing," he said. "We need to kind of back off the idea of vaccination, because that's not going to change the inmate population, either. The inmate population has not been forced to vaccinate either."

About 52% of the people in prisons and jails are vaccinated against COVID-19. There's an array of reasons for the low vaccination rate among the incarcerated, said Chad Petitpas, who is incarcerated at Robinson Correctional Institution. Petitpas spoke with more than a dozen of his peers, only one of whom got the shot. He identified three reasons for why they opted against the vaccine.

For one, there's significant distrust between the incarcerated and those who run the prisons. They don't feel the DOC has been honest with them or with the public about how it has run the system during the pandemic. Second, those who might be swayed by corrections employees are discouraged because even they won't get the shot. And third, prisoners know incarcerated peers who have gotten the shot and still contracted COVID.

Prisoners also are susceptible to conspiracy theories they hear about , said Ray Boyd, who was released from Cheshire Correctional Institution last November after serving almost 30 years behind bars. Then there are socially conscious people who remember the Tuskegee Experiment, where the government withheld life-saving medications from African American men in order to study the progression of syphilis.

"You have all these different ideologies that float around the prison system. A lot of times it deters people from wanting to take the vaccination," said Boyd, who was vaccinated after catching the virus and served as a COVID ambassador when he was incarcerated , trying to convince his peers to get the shot. "I didn't want anyone to experience what it felt like for an elephant to be sitting on your chest, trying to take your last breath."

Petitpas has gotten both his shots and a booster. He said he's also gotten the virus twice. He's still dealing with lingering symptoms, respiratory issues and some weird rashes that come and go. Still, he doesn't regret getting vaccinated. He just thinks getting COVID is inevitable, considering where he lives, in a dormitory-style housing unit at Robinson Correctional Institution. In a room where social distancing is impossible, where he" 3.5 feet from those who sleep next to him, Petitpas watches the virus spread from bunk bed to bunk bed, a silent stalker from which there is no escape.

"You can count on getting it. It's just a matter of time," Petitpas said. "Even people who are vaccinated are exposed to this virus without a break. So, it feels like even people who are vaccinated, that vaccination doesn't really have a chance to work."

Growing tensions: Tensions are starting to grow between vaccinated and unvaccinated members of the incarcerated population, Petitpas said. It can get uncomfortable when an unmasked person approaches their masked incarcerated peers.

"You feel like you have to defend your area," Petitpas said. "That causes animosity and tension among you and the people who don't think this is anything more than a glorified cold."

Prisons with housing units that aren't open-floor dorms have their own set of problems. The incarcerated are locked in their cells for long periods of time. Boyd said he'd get about an hour out of his cell each day so long as the facility had the staff, but if too many are out of work, he'd only get about 15 minutes out of his cell every 24 hours.

"You couldn't even talk to anybody. It was, 'Come out, take your shower, and lock up,' " said Boyd.

Corrections staff dispute the extent of lockdowns. Provost, the union president at MacDougall-Walker, said modifications have been made to lockdown policies so, even if staffing levels are low, the incarcerated can still shower, make phone calls and eat outside their cells.

"We're not locking them up and throwing the key away," said Howard, the union president at Cheshire Correctional. "They're still getting their time to eat, their time to shower, their time on the phones to talk to their loved ones."

Boyd said the time he served in prison during the pandemic was the most isolating of the 29.5 years he spent locked up. Trying to channel his energy into something productive, he wrote a book called "The Model Inmate," so people would know what good he'd done with his life, how he'd mentored incarcerated young people and walked away from a life of gang violence.

He was scared of dying in his cell, forever defined by the life he took when he was 17.

"I spent 60% of my life incarcerated," Boyd said. "I didn't want to just be remembered for the crime that I committed."

CSCU

from Page 1

holidays — Wesleyan and Yale universities are among some of those schools, as is the University of Connecticut.

In a message sent out to students and staff last Thursday, UConn officials announced that the first two weeks of the spring semester, which begins Jan. 18, will be entirely remote. Move-in for residential students at the Storrs and Stamford campuses was pushed back to Jan. 29.

"At this point, we are looking only at the two weeks that's been announced," UConn spokesperson Stephanie Reitz said. "But we're monitoring all the public health indicators, and if we have to make a change, we would do that if necessary, but we will communicate it out as broadly and as quickly as we could."

The university also stated in the announcement that COVID vaccine booster shots will be required for eligible students in the near future.

No date has been set for when students would need to get the booster.

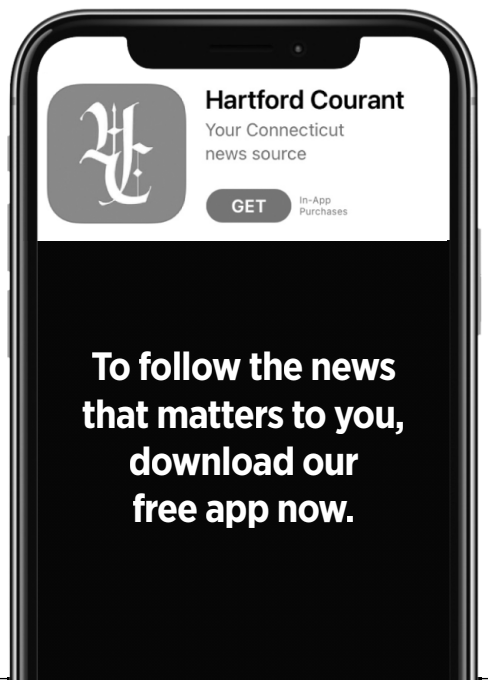
Students can find more information about how to get boosters and how to report receiving the dose to the university through the Student Health and Wellness site.

The University of New Haven announced this week that students, faculty and staff are required to get a vaccine booster dose by Jan. 31.

Yale also announced last month that all students who are eligible to receive a COVID vaccine booster are required to get one by Jan. 18.

Hartford Courant

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TRIBUNE PUBLISHING

CONNECTICUT

Minimal changes in Dem, GOP remap plans

State Supreme Court has till Feb. 15 to finalize congressional districts

By Susan Haigh
Associated Press

Proposed maps that revamp Connecticut's congressional district boundaries, submitted by legislative Democrats and Republicans ahead of the Connecticut Supreme Court's redistricting public hearing on Friday, would make relatively few changes to the state's existing five congressional districts.

Both parties said, in briefs submitted for the court's redistricting expert Nathan Persily to consider, they're suggesting minimal changes to accommodate the state's shifting population and to comply with the court's order that districts be changed "only to the extent reasonably required" to ensure they are as equal in population as practicable and meet other requirements.

"Given the 2020 Census data, the five Congressional districts should each have a target population of 721,189," the Democrats wrote in their brief. "The principal challenge in equalizing the districts requires moving people into the Second District, which is underpopulated by 21,288 people, and moving people out of the Fourth District, which is overpopulated by 25,627 people."

By adjusting the population in those two districts, which don't border one another, some adjustments were made in both plans to remaining districts.

The Democrats said their proposed map moves district lines in only four towns that were already divided between two congressional districts. Under their plan, the Republicans said the congressional districts will still retain an average of 96.5% of current residents. However, they said their proposed map reduces the current number of towns split between two congressional districts from five to four.

Yet the Republicans, who previously advocated for more substantial changes, suggested Persily recommend the court consider a "good government" map for the 2022 redistricting that uses traditional redistricting principles, such as keeping the districts compact and including communities of interest. They point to the oddly shaped First Congressional District as a prime example of gerrymandering, at one point recommending the Hartford-centric district look much more cohesive.

The current shape of the district is often said to resemble a lobster claw. It was created in 2001 to ensure two incumbent members of Congress could run for re-election after the state lost a congressional district.

"This created the First District's bizarre shape, which fails to comport with traditional redistricting principles," the GOP wrote in its brief.

Connecticut's highest court last month appointed Persily, a Stanford University law professor who served as Connecticut's special master in 2011, after the bipartisan Connecticut Reapportionment Commission couldn't reach an agreement on redrawing the congressional district boundaries. The panel of state legislators did reach bipartisan deals on new legislative district lines.

Persily is required to submit his congressional redistricting plan to the State Supreme Court on or before Jan. 18. The justices, who will then accept additional submissions, will have until Feb. 15 to establish the final maps.

Gang task force IDs suspects in 'ghost gun' investigation

East Hartford men accused of using 3D printers to manufacture and sell hard-to-track weapons

By Edmund H. Mahony
Hartford Courant

A federal gang task force has charged two East Hartford men with using high-tech, 3D printers and mail order parts to manufacture and sell untraceable "ghost guns," which have become weapons of choice for gang members and other criminals who cannot legally obtain weapons.

Law enforcement targeted John Lee Ortiz, 28, and Audley Reeves, 30, early in December based on information supplied by another criminal. They were arrested earlier this week and held without bail after a monthlong series of undercover weapons purchases by Hartford police and FBI agents.

When members of the North Connecticut Gang Task Force searched Reeve's apartment on Church Street at 6 a.m. on Tuesday, they apparently interrupted him in the process of manufacturing an assault rifle.

A court filing in the case said: "Investigators also observed a 3D printer on top of the coffee table, which was in the process of printing a portion of a firearm (later confirmed to be the stock of an AR-15 style assault rifle)."

Scattered around the apartment were other weapons in various stages of manufacture and weapon components apparently obtained by mail order from elsewhere in the country.

The court filings contain transcribed conversations in which Ortiz tells an FBI operative that he was selling guns for Reeves, who was having difficulty making both pistols and assault-type rifles fast enough to keep up with demand.

"Bet ima grab that black one an yellow one tomorrow," the undercover operative told Ortiz, while trying to line up a purchase in a Dec. 29 text message exchange.

"First come first serve bro," Ortiz replied

Law enforcement experts have said ghost guns are homemade weapons and have no serial numbers or other identifying markings, meaning they can't be traced to the owner, seller, or manufacturer of the firearm. The can be made with legally obtained mail order parts or with a combination of mail order parts and parts manufactured by 3D printer.

An affidavit in support of Reeve's arrest said, "The untraceable feature makes ghost guns attractive to those individuals who intend to use a firearm for criminal purposes or who cannot lawfully possess firearms."



"Ghost guns," like these seized in California, have become weapons of choice for gang members and other criminals. **HAVEN DALEY/AP**

Ortiz and Reeve are charged with federal crimes associated with the manufacture and sale of guns. During the December undercover purchases, investigators bought seven handguns, a Bushmaster .223 caliber rifle, and ammunition from Ortiz. Most of the handguns had no serial numbers and plastic components made by a 3D printer.

Both men are being held without bail and face a maximum of 5 years in prison on the manufacturing charges. Ortiz faces another 10 years maximum for selling guns to a felon.

This FBI's Northern Connecticut Gang Task Force includes members of the Hartford Police Department, East Hartford Police Department, New Britain Police Department, West Hartford Police Department, Connecticut State Police and Connecticut Department of Correction.

Hartford-area Jewish groups to get over $4M

By Susan Dunne
Hartford Courant

HARTFORD — Gerry and Karen Goldberg are dedicated to the future of the Jewish community in the Capitol region. The West Hartford couple has pledged $1 million to the new Life & Legacy initiative administered by the Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Hartford.

The Goldbergs' gift, which will be bequeathed after one of them dies, is one of 148 pledges, totaling $4,944,287, promised to Life & Legacy since it was established in April 2021.

The Hartford fund is just one of 72 branches of the Life & Legacy initiative, which was started 10 years ago by the Agawam, Massachusetts-based Harold Grinspoon foundation.

In those years, the branches in the United States and Canada have collected a total of $1.24 billion in pledges geared toward "creating a future for the Jewish community," said Elana MacGilpin, the development officer for the Hartford Life & Legacy program.

New Haven and Stamford also have Life & Legacy branches.

The gifts to the Hartford fund range from a few thousand dollars to two pledges of $1 million, MacGilpin said. The gifts are "after-lifetime" gifts to be received after donors' deaths.

"People might want to make a contribution to their favorite organizations today, but they may not have the capacity to do so. After they pass, they might have other capabilities to do so, as part of their will or retirement account or life-insurance policy," MacGilpin said. "The legacy program allows everybody to make a meaningful gift to organizations they love and cherish."

The Goldbergs have been contributors for years. In their 20s, they gave their time. Today, in their 50s, they give both time and money.

"When we first came to Connecticut, we didn't really have very much. The only way really give back to the community was through volunteerism," Gerry Goldberg said. "Fortunately, Lady Luck has smiled on us. We came into a different financial position over time."

Gerry Goldberg is CEO and founder of wealth management firm GYL Financial Synergies. He is a trustee of Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Hartford. He also is past president of the Hebrew High School of New England and past trustee of the board for Solomon Schechter Day School.

Goldberg said he and his wife have donated about $1 million already to community organizations. Their Life & Legacy gift will go to organizations they choose, the fund administered by the Jewish Community Foundation.

"A portion will go to the foundation itself. Another portion will go to Jewish Family Services, which has a food pantry. Some will go to Voices of Hope, that does a lot of educational programs about the Holocaust, to fight bias and bigotry," Goldberg said. "Another recipient will be the New England Jewish Academy. We're still finalizing other organizations on the list."



Gerry and Karen Goldberg, of West Hartford, pledged $1 million to the new Life & Legacy initiative administered by the Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Hartford. **JEWISH COMMUNITY FOUNDATION/COURTESY**

Goldberg, in his wealth-management work, advises people considering a legacy gift to consult a financial adviser, an accountant and a family attorney, to make sure family members are taken care of.

"People want to make a difference with their gift, but they also want to do the right thing by their spouse and family," he said.

For details on the Life & Legacy program, visit jcfhartford.org.

Susan Dunne can be reached at sdunne@courant.com.

Another special election set for open House seat

By Daniela Altimari
Hartford Courant

Voters in the 71st Assembly District will head to the polls on Feb. 22 to chose a candidate to fill the unexpired term of Rep. Anthony J. D'Amelio, one of several lawmakers to step down in recent months.



D'Amelio



Simmons



McGee

Gov. Ned Lamont scheduled the election Friday, a week after D'Amelio resigned. The Waterbury Republican, who has served since 1997, is leaving politics to focus on his restaurant business.

D'Amelio is part of a small wave of mid-term resignations from the House just weeks before the legislature is set to reconvene.

"We'll have five in about a year, which I think is a record," said Rep. Vin Candelora of North Branford, the Republican leader in the House. "I've never seen that volume."

The reasons for the departures are varied but the pandemic played a role in at least in D'Amelio's case, where the COVID crisis placed new pressures on the restaurant industry.

"It's no secret he was looking to retire, but the issues of the pandemic exacerbated it," Candelora said.

The first to depart was Rep. J.P. Sredzinski, a Republican who represented Newtown and Monroe, and stepped down last year, citing the demands of work and family.

Rep. Caroline Simmons, a Democrat from Stamford, vacated her seat in November after she was elected the city's mayor.

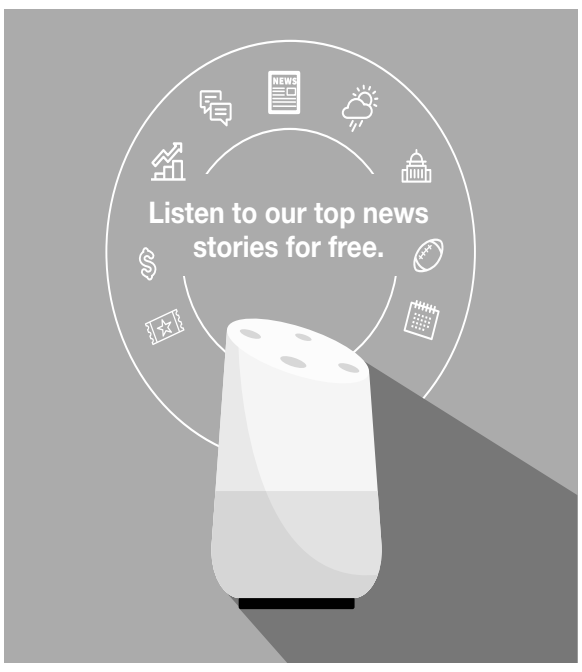
And this week, Rep. Brandon McGee, a Democrat whose district includes Hartford and Windsor, announced his resignation. McGee will take a job as a senior adviser for the Lamont reelection campaign.

Those departures follow the resignation of Democratic state Rep. Michael DiMassa of West Haven in October following his arrest on fraud charges. A special election to fill his unexpired term was held on Dec. 14; Democrat Treneé McGee won the race over Republican Richard DePalma and petitioning candidate Portia Bias, who is unaffiliated.

A date for the special election to succeed McGee has not been set.

Under state law, the governor is required to issue a writ of special election within 10 days of a legislative seat becoming vacant, and a special election must be held 46 days after the writ is issued.

The legislative session begins on Feb. 9.



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LIVING

CELEBRITIES

Judd hikes 11 months after Congo fall

From news services

Less than a year after breaking her leg in a gruesome fall, actor Ashley Judd completed a 25-mile hike.

The "Double Jeopardy" star wrote in an Instagram post that the hike took place on the 11-month anniversary of her February accident in Congo, which she said left her "nearly hemorrhaging to death," along with four breaks in her right leg and a paralyzed foot.

"What is here, now, is a leg that works (with a wee limp and a some knee stiffness at times), a spirit that (won't) let anything hold it back, and a desire to show up for the fullness of a beautiful life," Judd wrote Wednesday.

Judd, 53, added that she is eager to return to Congo following months of rehabilitation.

"My heart is open and eager," she wrote.

"I do not yet know what I will feel, I know only that I will feel, and I am ready to greet the experience with curiosity, wonder, and an abundance of gratitude for every life-saving sister and brother who stroked my face, carried my make shift hammock through the rain forest for hours, wept alongside my agony, or simply laid beside me as I bit a stick while in shock," Judd continued. "And really, all that is in the past now."

Judd thanked the people who rescued her in an August Instagram post, writing that if it wasn't for them, "internal bleeding would have likely killed me, and I would have lost my leg."

In August, Judd also shared a video showing her walking again in the Swiss National Park.



An accident in the Congo left Ashley Judd with four breaks in her right leg. **JAY L. CLENDENIN/LOS ANGELES TIMES 2018**

Mara to play Hepburn in biopic: A biopic of actor Audrey Hepburn starring Rooney Mara is in the works at Apple.

Oscar-nominated "Call Me by Your Name" director Luca Guadagnino will helm the project, with Mara producing and "The Giver" co-writer Michael Mitnick penning the script.

Though plot details are being kept under wraps, Hepburn is an acting legend celebrated for her performances in classic films such as "Breakfast at Tiffany's," "My Fair Lady," "Wait Until Dark," "Charade" and "Sabrina." During her four-decade career, Hepburn achieved EGOT status, winning Emmy, Oscar, Tony and Grammy awards, the last of which she received posthumously. She was also a dedicated humanitarian.

Mara has been nominated for an Oscar twice, for her work in 2011's "The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo" and 2015's "Carol."

DeBose to host 'SNL': "West Side Story" star Ariana DeBose will make her "Saturday Night Live" hosting debut on Jan. 15, the NBC sketch show's first installment of the new year. DeBose, who plays Anita in Steven Spielberg's adaptation of the musical, will be joined by Roddy Ricch, who will appear on the show for the first time as musical guest.

DeBose wrote Thursday on Twitter, "I'm hosting @nbcsnl. Hold please while I go collect my extremities, as I have exploded from excitement and sensible fear."

Jan. 8 birthdays: Actor Larry Storch is 99. TV host Charles Osgood is 89. Singer Shirley Bassey is 85. TV host Bob Eubanks is 84. Singer Anthony Gourdine is 81. Actor Yvette Mimieux is 80. Guitarist Robby Krieger is 76. Actor Ron Cephas Jones is 65. Singer Jenny Lewis is 46. Actor Gaby Hoffman is 40. Actor Cynthia Erivo is 35.



ASK AMY

By Amy Dickinson

askamy@amydickinson.com Twitter@askingamy

Single woman mired in wedding movie plot

Dear Amy: I am a (usually content) single 30-year-old woman.

My mother is getting married in two months. She has already tried to set me up with her fiance's nephew (um, no), as well as a former employee (good guy but not for me). Now her fiance has decided that the wedding is the perfect time to introduce me to all his single co-workers (no, just no).

Add in all the well-meaning aunties asking me when I'm going to find a "nice man and settle down." I've started to dread this day.

My solution? Take my own date. There will be no awkward set-ups if I already have a date. I'll still have to field inappropriate questions from the aunties, but at least I wouldn't have to face them alone.

Four months ago, I signed up for a dating app and have since been reminded why I'm happily single. With the wedding only two months away, do I admit defeat and go solo?

I also feel that this wedding is not the best time to any prospective match to "meet the parents." Your ideas?

— Destined to be Dateless

Dear Dateless: I have a dim memory of seeing this basic plot in a Debra Messing movie ... what was it called? Oh yes — (checks Wikipedia) — "The Wedding Date." Messing's character hires a male escort to be her wedding date. Hilarity ensues. Love blooms.

The solution is for you to bring a (male or female) friend as your date, with the expressed intent that this person should serve as your wing-person. Their role would be to ward off random singletons, and if necessary, to use a serving platter from the buffet table as a shield to protect you from nosey aunties.

No matter what — keep a sense of humor about this annoyance. Having people try to set you up may make you feel as if you are somehow inadequate as you are (you're not), but the intent is usually benign: People who equate happiness with being coupled-up think you're wonderful.

Your problem contains the foundation for a solid romantic comedy, so after the wedding is over, you might want to write it up.

Dear Amy: I recently celebrated my 70th birthday.

It truly was a memorable day for me, except for one thing. My best friend of more than 40 years did not call or send a card or gift.

I received an acknowledgment on Facebook, but it was nothing notable.

We live five minutes from each other and see each other frequently. We were together a week after my birthday. Again, she never mentioned it. We have not had an argument.

I never miss her special day. I have given gifts and always call on the day of her birthday. I am hurt and angry. At this point, I just want to ghost her. Help this old lady deal with this breach in friendship.

— Sad at Seventy

Dear Sad: Turning 70 is a milestone birthday, but please don't turn this disappointment into severing a relationship of many decades.

It is not clear from your account whether your friend's behavior toward you on this birthday was different from other years.

When a friend's behavior toward you changes or is baffling, the most obvious conclusion would be to wonder what might be going on in her own life.

Before ghosting her, it would be kindest toward both of you if you explored this in a simple and transparent way: "I have to admit that I was disappointed that you didn't call on my birthday. It was such a big deal for me, and I felt like you missed it. This didn't seem normal for you, and I'm wondering if you're OK?"

I hope you two can clear the air.

Dear Amy: This great aunt appreciates your sensitive advice to the mother who is frustrated by repeated requests for gift lists from her partner's family.

Lists will not prevent her children from getting gifts they don't like. There will still be teachable moments.

I hope she will be rewarded, as our family was when a 4-year-old opened a package that was not what he expected, based on the shape and size. He examined it and cheerfully declared, "It's not what we wanted, but we like it."

— Grateful List User

Dear Grateful: When I was four, I opened a set of steak knives intended for my mother. I still remember how desperate I was to keep them.

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MUSIC

Songwriter Sam Fender caught between stardom, his hometown

By Alex Marshall
The New York Times

NORTH SHIELDS, England — Sam Fender, a singer-songwriter often labeled Britain's answer to Bruce Springsteen, realized his life had changed for good on Halloween.

This year he bought "eight massive boxes" of chocolate for any children who might knock on his door in North Shields, a working-class town on the banks of the River Tyne in northeast England.

Fender expected the stash to last all night, but it went almost instantly.

"Everyone in the neighborhood was, like, 'That's Sam Fender's house, let's go knock!'" the musician recalled. The trick-or-treaters' parents were more keen on getting selfies with the star than candy, whether they knew his music or not.

Over the past year, Fender, 27, has become one of Britain's biggest music stars, but said he still doesn't want to be "that guy" who is too famous to answer his door on Halloween — a position that touches on a tension running through his newfound success: how to be a star while remaining part of the community that defines his songwriting.

His second album of anthemic pop-rock, "Seventeen Going Under," released in October, quickly hit the top of the British charts, just like his debut did, and since then he has sold out arenas and announced a 45,000-capacity outdoor show in London.

For a few weeks in fall, the album's title track sparked a TikTok trend because of lyrics — "I was far too scared to hit him, but I would hit him in a heartbeat now" — that speak to suffering at the hands of bullies and domestic abusers.



Songwriter Sam Fender on Dec. 13 along the River Tyne in North Shields, England. **MARY TURNER/THE NEW YORK TIMES**

All that success had been built on the back of North Shields, a depressed town of 30,000 people in a region where 34% of children live in poverty, but is also home, Fender said, to some of "the funniest, most loving, caring people you've ever met."

Fender sets most of his songs in the town, often referencing local pubs or fistfights on the nearby chilly beaches, and sings about his and his friends' experiences, including troubled childhoods, male suicides and widespread political alienation.

This local focus has won him fans far from Britain. Steven Van Zandt, a veteran member of Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band who regularly plays Fender's music on his U.S. radio show, said that Fender "could have taken the easy route" thanks to his voice and looks. Instead, Fender chose to sing "these intensely personal songs of working-class life that had no guarantee of success," Van Zandt said, calling that decision "courageous."

Fender seemed overjoyed that some of his heroes, who include Springsteen, loved his music, but in an interview, he returned to talking about his hometown again and again.

At one point, he mentioned a campaign he led last year to stop the local council from charging people money for calling its emergency help lines for the homeless. After Fender took to social media to complain about the problem, the council promised to make the lines free. "I sometimes feel like, 'Am I really doing anything that good?'" Fender said. That was a rare moment when he felt he was, he said.

Fender insisted he would never leave North Shields behind and became visibly anxious when talking about the possibility. But Halloween night and other similar experiences had shown him it might be time to try living somewhere else for at least a few months. Somewhere that doesn't feel like a "goldfish bowl," he said, maybe New York, maybe London, somewhere that is "the opposite of where I'm from." The only thing for certain was his songs wouldn't change.

"You can take a lad out of Shields," he said, "but you can't take Shields out of the lad."

HOROSCOPES

Tarot.com

Aries (March 21-April 19): You may receive public recognition that you've long desired today. While getting the blessing of authority figures can feel really good, there are some emotional wounds that it just can't fix. Don't be afraid to be honest.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): You may be afraid that you've gotten on the wrong side of the rules, but any dealings you may have with bureaucratic regulations are actually more likely than usual to go in your favor now. With the crisis diminished, you can use this opportunity to look at where your fear might be coming from.

Gemini (May 21-June 20): A potential arrangement for sharing money or property could work very well for you, but it also may not resemble how you expected your life to look. The fear of having to explain something to your friends could be holding you back. You all may have to update your views!

Cancer (June 21-July 22): Past wounds about power dynamics could be triggered by someone else reminding you of a past friendship that didn't go well, even if they don't mean to. You might be able to talk to the other person about your concerns. Taking the risk is likely to go well.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): Success can be found on your own terms right now — not anyone else's! You might have reason to celebrate your strengths today. If you're still stuck carrying around an outdated view of yourself as a disorganized person, their impressed reactions might help you.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Having fun and enjoying yourself might be tempting today. Even so, you're probably keenly aware that your responsibilities still exist. Delegating some of your duties could get you more room to relax, but you still might be afraid of things not getting done to your standards. You fear losing control.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): A close relationship may be going through a rough patch at the moment, but spending time by yourself in a place where you feel secure can help you figure out how to respond. You are capable of having a productive conversation, as long as you know where you stand.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Responsibilities at home may seem overwhelming for you at this time, but others might actually be willing to pitch in if you let them know how you're feeling. The planets are equipping you with all you need to tell your side of the story in a way that others should find relatable.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): The people around you might be able to talk you into having a good time today, even if you're not feeling very friendly in the morning. In the end, the greatest joy will likely come from being heard and understood by your friends — regardless of what you do together.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You may look and feel good today. When opportunities for pleasure come your way, you might not be inclined to hold back! However, some monetary guilt that dates back to your early years could put a damper on your fun by telling you that you should save money. Look at your current financial picture.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): The intensity of your positive feelings for a friend or loved one might make you nervous — in particular, the idea of being vulnerable enough to let the other person know how much you care could be terrifying. Do your best to open up to them — it will go better than you expect!

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): Your finances might not be what you want them to be right now, especially if your friends appear to have more money than you do. Of course, you probably have more detailed information about your own situation than you do about theirs. Try to turn your focus inward.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Associated Press

On Jan. 8, 1912, the African National Congress was founded in South Africa.

In 1918, President Woodrow Wilson outlined his Fourteen Points for lasting peace after World War I.

In 1935, rock-and-roll legend Elvis Presley was born in Tupelo, Mississippi.

In 1994, Tonya Harding won the ladies' U.S. Figure Skating Championship, a day after Nancy Kerrigan dropped out because of the clubbing attack that had injured her right knee.

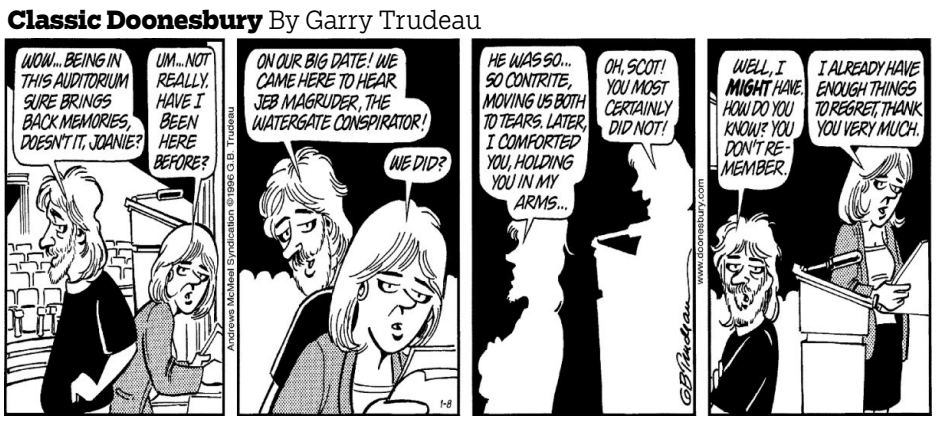
In 2016, Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, the world's most-wanted drug lord, was captured for a third time in a daring raid by Mexican marines.

In 2020, Iran struck back at the United States for killing Iran's top military commander, firing missiles at two Iraqi military bases housing American troops; more than 100 U.S. service members were diagnosed with traumatic brain injuries after the attack.

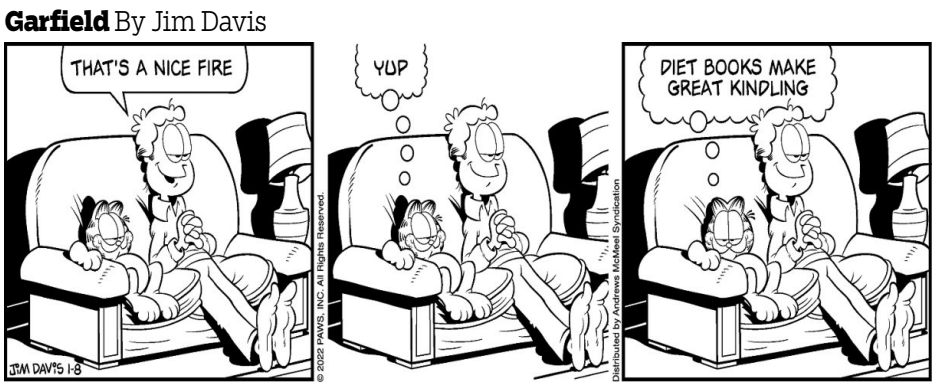
Peanuts By Charles M. Schulz



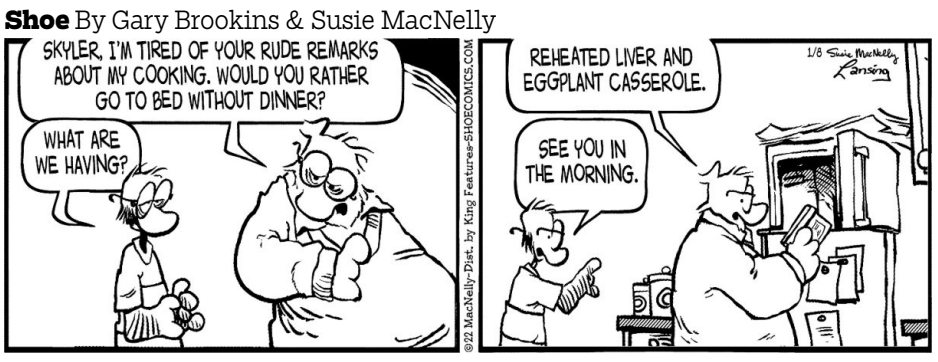
Classic Doonesbury By Garry Trudeau



Garfield By Jim Davis



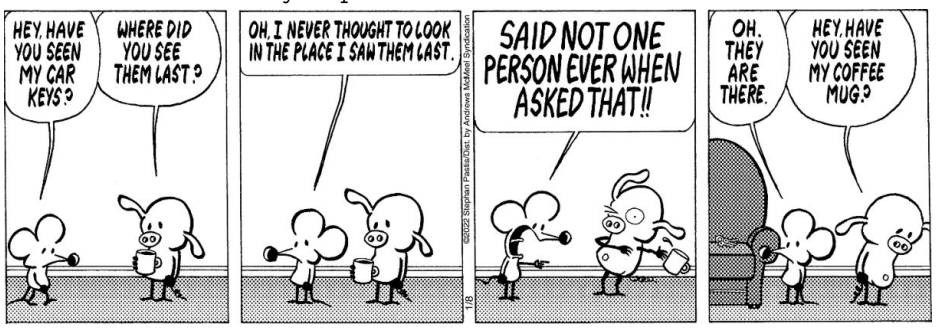
Shoe By Gary Brookins & Susie MacNelly



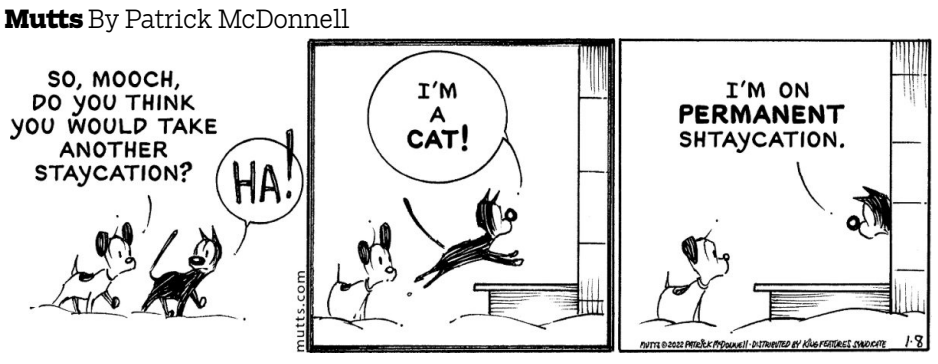
Dustin By Steve Kelley & Jeff Parker



Pearls Before Swine By Stephan Pastis



Mutts By Patrick McDonnell



Arctic Circle By Alex Hallatt



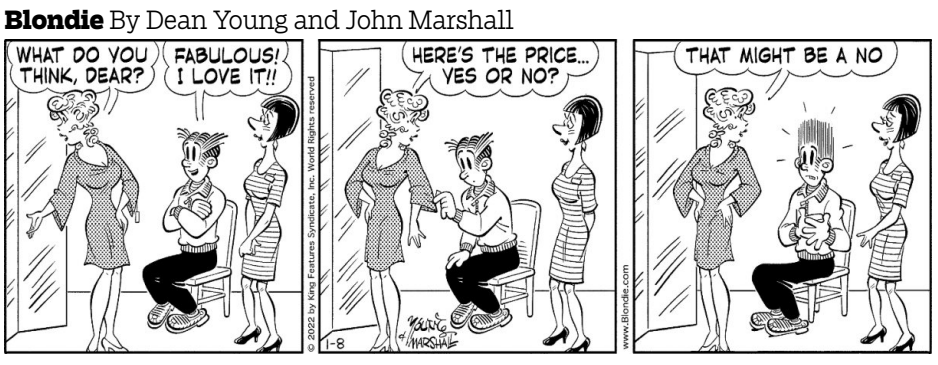
Jump Start By Robb Armstrong



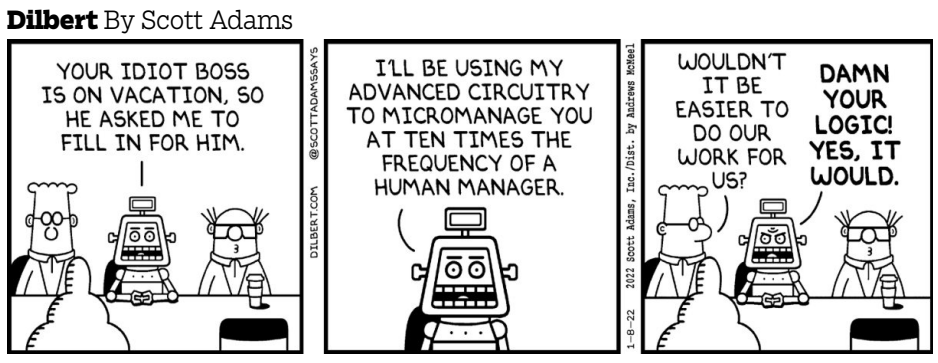
Get Fuzzy By Darby Conley



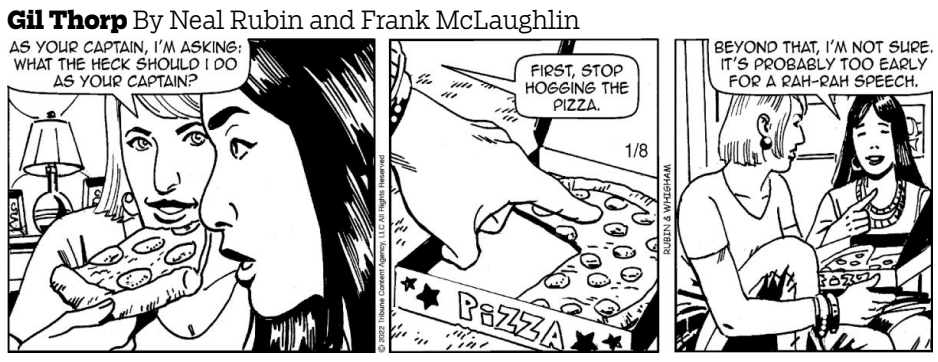
Blondie By Dean Young and John Marshall



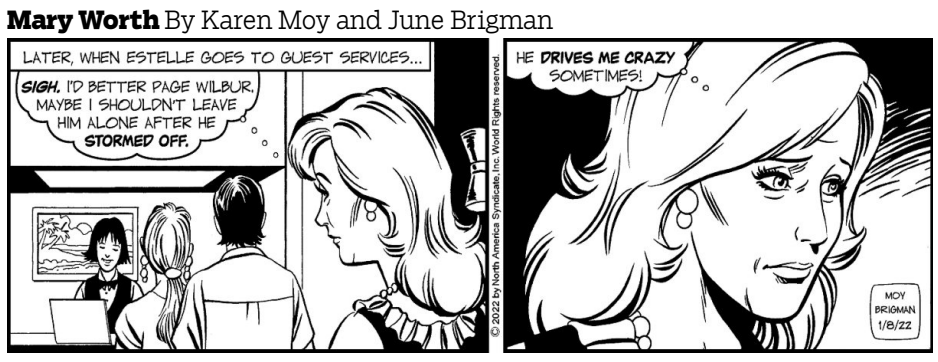
Dilbert By Scott Adams



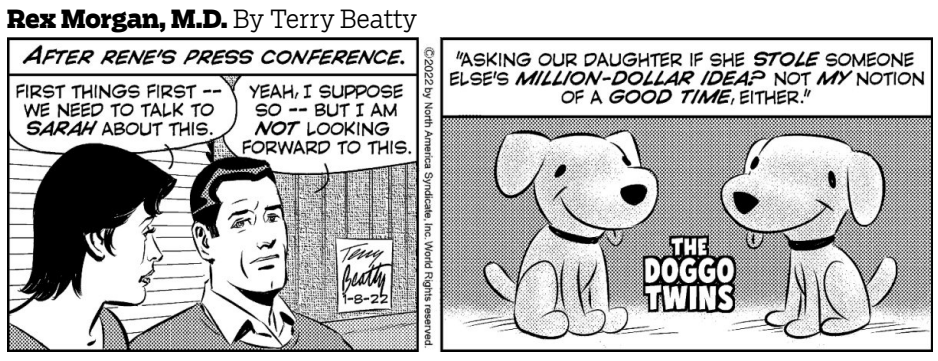
Gil Thorp By Neal Rubin and Frank McLaughlin



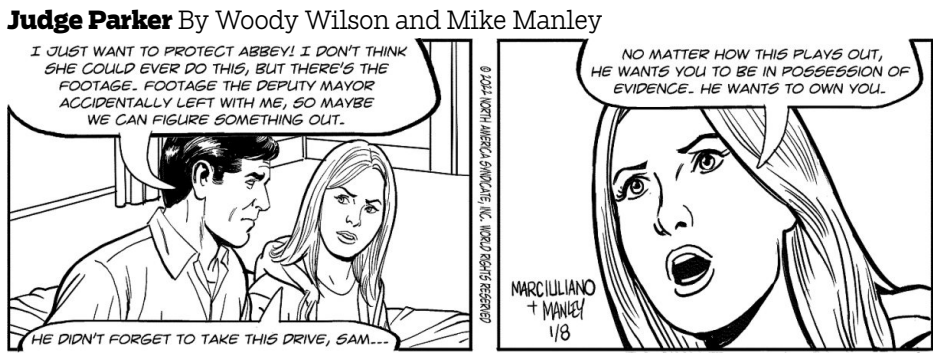
Mary Worth By Karen Moy and June Brigman



Rex Morgan, M.D. By Terry Beatty



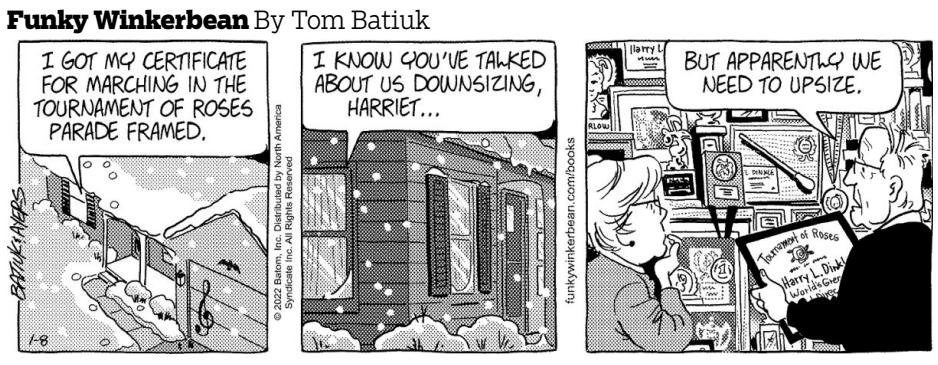
Judge Parker By Woody Wilson and Mike Manley



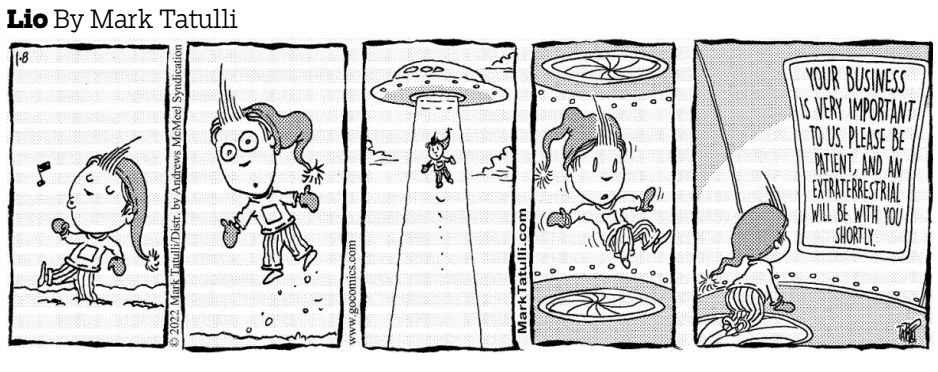
Baldo By Cantu and Castellanos



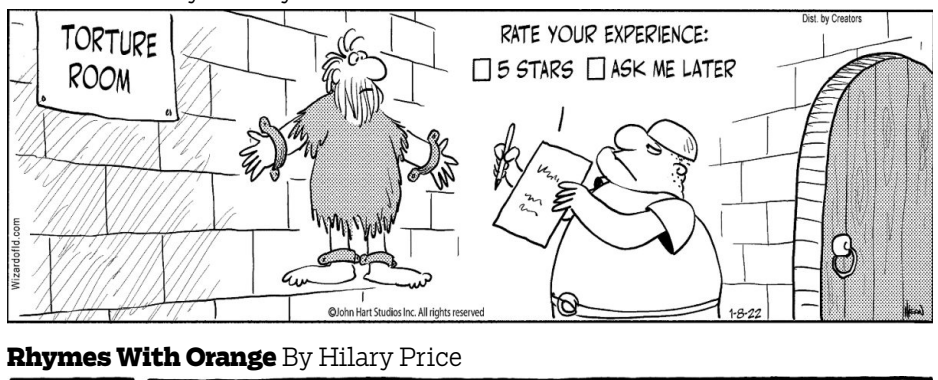
Funky Winkerbean By Tom Batiuk



Lio By Mark Tatulli



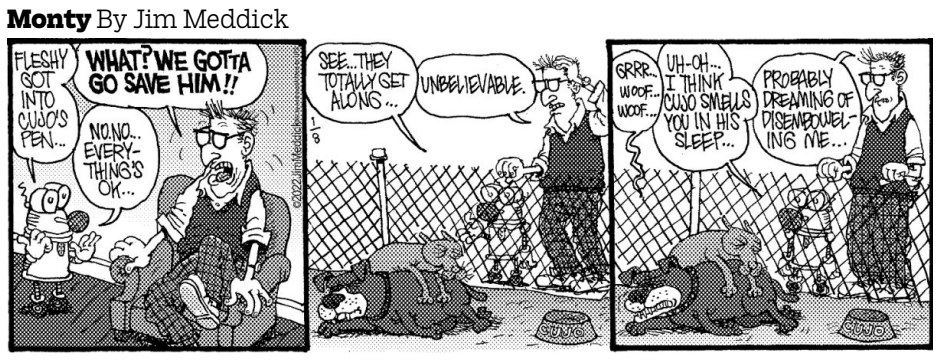
Wizard Of Id By Johnny Hart and Brant Parker



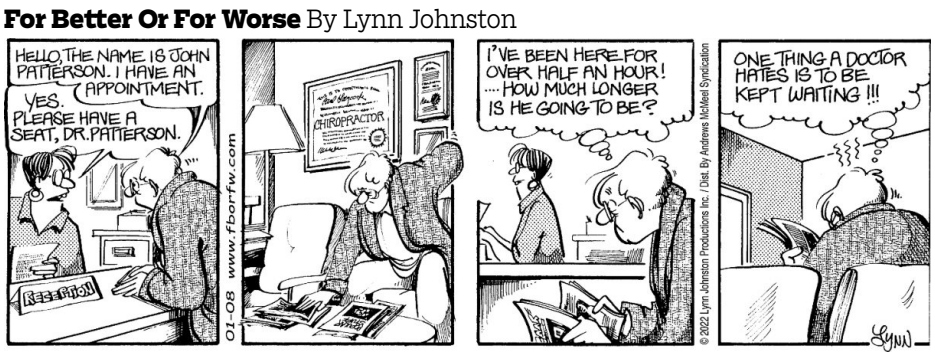
Rhymes With Orange By Hilary Price



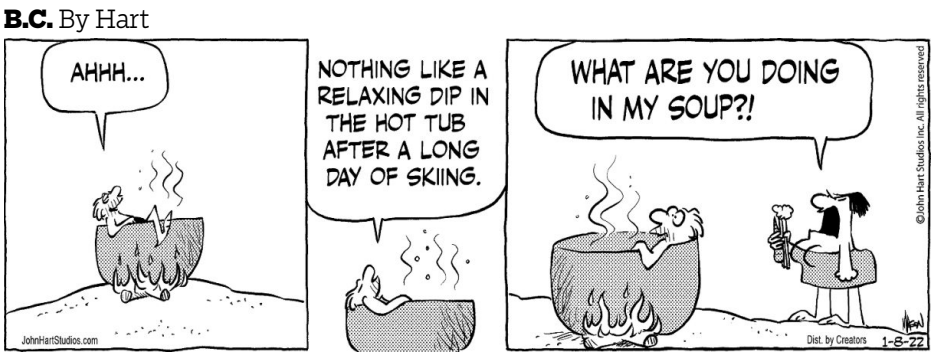
Monty By Jim Meddick



For Better Or For Worse By Lynn Johnston



B.C. By Hart



Beetle Bailey by Mort, Greg & Brian Walker



Hi & Lois By Greg and Brian Walker and Chance Browne



Hagar The Horrible By Chris Browne



Non Sequitur By Wiley Miller



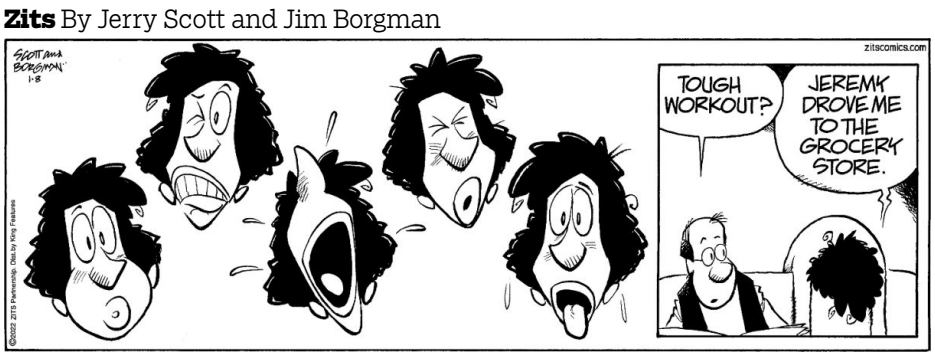
Curtis By Ray Billingsley



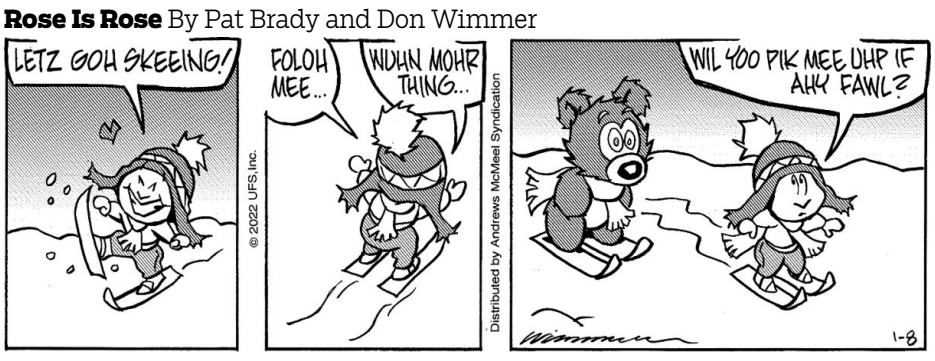
Pickles By Brian Crane



Zits By Jerry Scott and Jim Borgman



Rose Is Rose By Pat Brady and Don Wimmer



Mother Goose And Grimm By Mike Peters



CROSSWORD

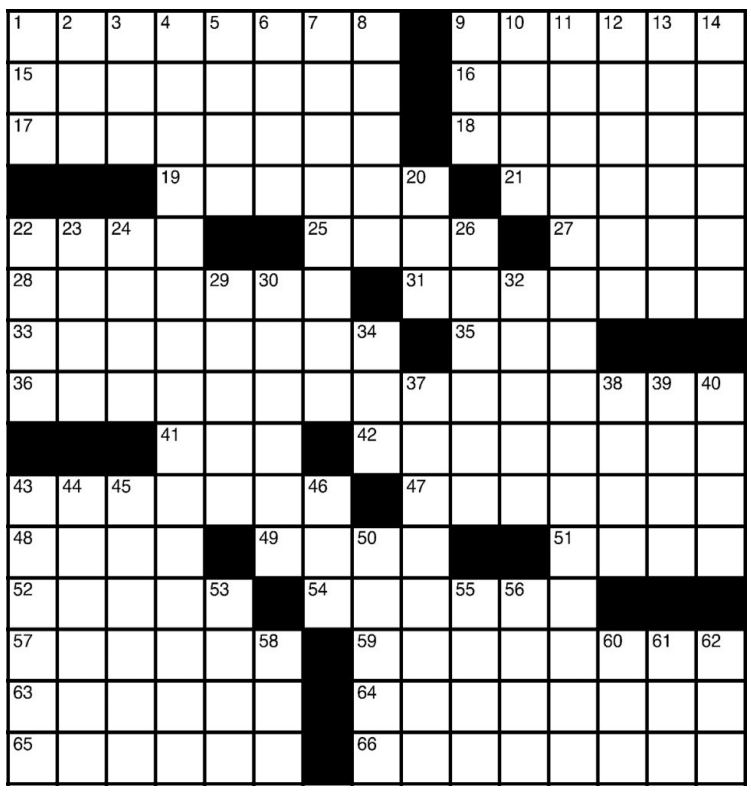
EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

Across

1 Brews-to-bruises event?
9 Rubberneck, at times
15 Epitome of Americanism?
16 "Seinfeld" character who dated baseball's Keith Hernandez
17 Vitamin intake for some
18 Screenwriter __ Trumbo
19 Events in a crime film subgenre
21 Bypass
22 Criticism
25 Doesn't squander
27 "By the power vested __ ... "
28 Winter hat feature
31 Got into a new outfit
33 Godfather cocktail ingredient
35 KFC bucket piece
36 Many of them have sisters
41 MLB segment
42 "Pens down"
43 Put drinks on plastic?
47 Source of added protection
48 Two-time Tony winner Judith
49 Appoint
51 Boris Johnson, e.g.
52 So yesterday
54 "Aha!"
57 Capital north of Washington, D.C.
59 Salsa roja ingredient
63 Defeated
64 Tonsorial work
65 Least constrained
66 Restrained

Down

1 "Batman" sound
2 Make fun of
3 Final Fantasy, e.g., briefly
4 Christmas shopping draw
5 "The Scarlet Letter" letter
6 Per unit
7 Figure out
8 Looks lasciviously
9 H.S. dropout's test
10 "__, I am not coop'd here for defence!": Shak.
11 Everywhere, "if you have the time": Steven Wright
12 Fraud with checks
13 Massive, in Montréal
14 Let
20 Jiff
22 __ Street: R.L. Stine series
23 Like dad jokes, to kids
24 Depleted sea
26 Israeli violinist Mintz
29 For real
30 Lorazepam brand
32 Word on Spanish mail
34 Open about one's sexuality
37 __ tiger
38 This, in Tenerife
39 Sorry sort
40 Lissome
43 Bargain antithesis
44 Personal online image
45 Food giant
46 Main squeeze, in modern lingo
50 Lotsa
53 Lambs' moms
55 Lamb pen name
56 Marx not seen in films
58 Creature that can carry many times its body weight
60 Dolphins quarterback Tagovailoa
61 Shares again, on Twitter
62 __Kosh B'gosh



By David Karp — Tribune Content Agency 1/8/22

BRIDGE

BY STEVE BECKER

East dealer.
North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ A Q 10 3
♥ 9 6 4
♦ A 10 7
♣ A Q J

WEST
♠ 7 5 4
♥ K Q J 2
♦ 4 2
♣ 7 6 5 2

EAST
♠ J 9 6 2
♥ 8 7 3
♦ J 9 8 5
♣ 8 3

SOUTH
♠ K 8
♥ A 10 5
♦ K Q 6 3
♣ K 10 9 4

The bidding:

East	South	West	North
Pass	1 NT	Pass	6 NT

Opening lead — king of hearts.

Rectifying the count

There is a term in bridge called "rectifying the count," which applies to a condition necessary to perform a squeeze play. The expression is not well known to most players because squeezes are generally regarded as exclusively the province of the experts. However, this is more a case of lack of knowledge than of actual fact.

For example, take this deal where South gets to six notrump and West leads the king of hearts. When dummy appears, declarer finds he has only 11 sure winners.

If South is unfamiliar with squeezes, he wins the king of hearts with the ace and cashes all his high-card tricks, hoping to find a favorable division in either diamonds or spades and so acquire a 12th trick. When neither hope materializes, he finishes down one.

But if South is familiar with squeezes, he ducks the king of hearts at trick one. The purpose of this play is to "rectify the count," meaning that declarer has all the remaining tricks but one.

Let's say West continues with the queen of hearts. South wins and cashes four club tricks, hoping to squeeze one opponent or the other out of a stopper or sure trick in another suit. In the actual case, this method of play succeeds. East can safely discard a heart on the third round of clubs, but he must then discard a spade or a diamond on the fourth club and so present declarer with his 12th trick.

It is not easy to recognize at the outset the importance of ducking the king of hearts at trick one.

The duck seems purposeless — but nothing could be further from the truth, since it creates the "all but one" situation that is nearly always required for a successful squeeze.

JUMBLE

BY DAVID HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

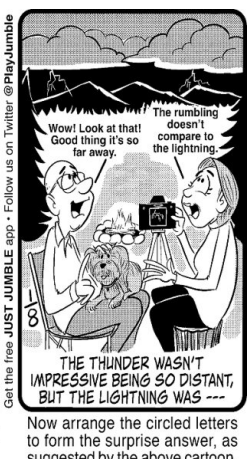
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

RIQKU

CEGOK

CIDNTU

LIROSA



Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: _____

(Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumbles: SPURN BLESS QUAINT SAFARI
Answer: They stayed at the beach resort near the Spain-France border to — "BASQUE" IN THE SUN

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TODAY'S SUDOKU

	8				5			
	3						1	
			1	9	4	5		
	1	9		4			2	
7		6				8		1
	2					6	7	
		3	4	6	8			
	9						3	
			2				6	

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit **www.sudoku.org.uk**

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

3	5	6	2	8	9	4	7	1
9	8	2	4	7	1	6	3	5
1	7	4	3	5	6	8	2	9
8	4	7	1	9	2	5	6	3
5	3	9	6	4	7	1	8	2
2	6	1	8	3	5	9	4	7
6	2	5	7	1	4	3	9	8
4	1	8	9	2	3	7	5	6
7	9	3	5	6	8	2	1	4

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS CROSSWORD PUZZLE

C	S	I	■	S	N	O	W	■	M	Y	G	O	S	H
H	O	N	■	C	O	P	A	■	Y	O	O	H	O	O
I	N	A	■	A	M	E	X	■	S	K	N	I	T	S
M	A	D	E	M	A	N	■	V	H	E	G	O	U	T
P	R	I	X	■	D	E	L	I	A	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	L	O	N	■	D	E	S	R	K	J	M	O	B
A	S	E	T	I	S	■	T	I	O	R	A	A	D	E
S	K	M	I	P	L	S	S	T	N	O	N	T	E	S
P	E	M	C	A	Y	N	S	■	A	N	G	T	S	T
S	W	A	A	T	T	E	A	M	■	A	L	E	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	H	E	Y	Y	A	■	E	R	M	A
H	I	P	S	T	E	R	■	R	O	A	D	H	O	G
O	N	E	C	A	R	■	D	I	R	T	■	O	V	A
O	C	T	O	P	I	■	N	A	T	O	■	R	I	M
F	A	S	T	E	N	■	A	D	A	M	■	N	E	E

Zippy "THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE TAPERED" Bill Griffith



Hartford Courant
SPORTS
COURANT.COM/SPORTS

Motoring Inside

ONE MORE FOR SUE BIRD



Seattle Storm guard Sue Bird (10) brings the ball up court against the Minnesota Lynx in the third quarter of a WNBA game on Aug. 24, 2021, in Minneapolis. **BRUCE KLUCKHOHN/AP**

SHE'S BACK!

UConn women's basketball legend Sue Bird announces she is returning to the WNBA for her 19th season

By Alexa Philippou | Hartford Courant

One day, Sue Bird will walk off into the sunset behind a legendary career of championships at every level to her name. That day is not today.

Following speculation that she would retire, Bird, 41, announced Friday via social media that she will return for her 19th WNBA campaign in 2022.

The Seattle Storm, where Bird has played her entire WNBA career, tweeted "Bird is back" with a graphic of Bird, before the four-time WNBA champ posted on her Instagram a clip from the Storm's 2021 playoff loss to the Phoenix Mercury where fans were chanting "one more year," along with the caption "Ok. Let's gooooo."

The team later deleted the tweet as Bird is technically a free agent and contract negotiations aren't supposed to happen until Jan. 15.

"I'm not 100% surprised," UConn coach Geno Auriemma said Friday. "I think for a player sometimes the hardest thing is to know when it's the perfect time to walk away. You don't ever want to leave too soon, and you certainly don't want to stay too long. But I think given the way Sue played this year and how she feels physically, I think she's making the best decision that she feels comfortable with, and I'm happy for her."

Bird had a strong 2021 season with the Storm, averaging 10.0 points and 5.3 assists per game on 43.1% shooting (41.9% on 3s), but the legendary UConn point guard and WNBA's all-time assists leader dwelled on the retirement question more so this offseason than ever before.

Turn to Bird, *Page 2*



It all started in Storrs for Sue Bird, who played for UConn from 1998-2002 and won two national titles. **HARTFORD COURANT FILE**

Quite a resume

In her lengthy career Sue Bird has put together an impressive list of accomplishments:

- Two-time national champion at UConn
- National college player of the year in 2002
- Five-time Olympic gold medalist
- First overall pick in 2002 WNBA Draft
- Four-time WNBA champ; 12-time All-Star

PATRIOTS

Judon, Patriots' pass rush must rediscover their form

By Andrew Callahan
Boston Herald

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — A look of bewilderment swept over Matt Judon's face Thursday.

Maybe the video feed had frozen during his morning press conference. A sign of the times.

Nope. Judon was just puzzled.

I've only recorded one QB hit over the past month? Really?

Yes, indeed.

"Alright well that's just how it goes!" the Pro Bowler bellowed.

Judon, the Patriots' top pass rusher and defensive MVP, has cooled considerably since the team blew out of Buffalo with a 14-10 win last month. After the bye week, and around a brief bout with COVID-19, he's failed to replicate the same type of pressure he did through 13 games. Worse yet, Judon's struggles have been emblematic of a quieter struggle within the defense.

Turn to Patriots, *Page 2*

UCONN MEN'S BASKETBALL

Huskies back from COVID-19 hiatus

By Shreyas Laddha
Hartford Courant

After 17 days, UConn men's basketball is finally back.

UConn (10-3, 1-1 Big East) heads on the road to face No. 24 Seton Hall (10-3, 1-2) on Saturday at the Prudential Center in Newark, New Jersey. The Huskies last played on Dec. 21 with a 78-70 win against Marquette. Since then, UConn had its next two games — Xavier on Dec. 28 and Butler on Jan. 1 — canceled due to COVID-19 issues within the Huskies' program.

Up next
UConn men at Seton Hall, noon, FOX
Inside
Recruit Alex Karaban enrolls early, joins program. **C4**

UConn had just six players that did not get COVID-19 according to coach Dan Hurley. Hurley is also recovering from COVID-19.

For Saturday's game, UConn should have its entire roster, but some players will play limited minutes. One of those players could be starting forward Adama Sanogo, who sustained a hamstring injury in the second half of the Marquette game. He has been limited at practice and his status going into Saturday is uncertain.

"That was the issue with Adama, we limited him to 12-15 minutes in the Marquette game and he still tweaked a hamstring because he is still not in game shape because of the abdominal thing," Hurley said.

UConn hit double digits in players who practiced on Thursday. Players who have missed practice will still play on Saturday.

Turn to Men, *Page 4*

UCONN WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Team to play with just seven players versus Creighton

Nika Mühl back, Aubrey Griffin likely out for season

By Alexa Philippou
Hartford Courant

Barring any unforeseen issues, the No. 11 UConn women's basketball team will return to the court Sunday against Creighton for its first game in 21 days when the Huskies host the Blue Jays at Gampel Pavilion.

The Huskies experienced an extended layoff after their first four games back from the holiday break were canceled due to COVID-19 issues. Three of the cancellations were because injuries and COVID-19 cases on UConn's side prevented the team from fielding seven players, the minimum required by the Big East to hold games.

UP NEXT
UConn women vs. Creighton, Sunday, 1 p.m., Gampel Pavilion

UConn will finally get above that threshold this weekend, but not easily. The Huskies will have seven players available, according to coach Geno Auriemma, including sophomore Nika Mühl, who missed the previous three games due to a lingering foot issue. She will be on a 15-minute time restriction, so maybe it's closer to six-and-a-half available.

"We'll do the best we can," Auriemma said Friday.

Auriemma said that four players contracted COVID-19 over the last few weeks and that symptoms for all were "almost nil." The team is 100% vaccinated.

Turn to Women, *Page 4*



Safety Tip of the Day

Use care when driving next to a snowplow on a major roadway. The snow that flies off the sides of the plow can hit your windshield making it difficult to see the road.

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SPORTS

UP NEXT

Patriots: at Dolphins, Sunday, 4:25 p.m.
Giants: Washington, Sunday, 1 p.m.
Jets: at Bills, Sunday, 4:25 p.m.
UConn MBB: at Seton Hall, Saturday, noon; St. John's (Gampel), Wednesday, 8:30 p.m.; at Providence, Jan. 15, 2 p.m.
UConn WBB: Creighton (Gampel), Sunday, 1 p.m.; at Butler, Wednesday, 7 p.m.; Xavier (XL), Jan. 15, noon
Celtics: Knicks, Saturday, 7:30 p.m.; Pacers, Monday, 7:30 p.m.; at Pacers, Wednesday, 7 p.m.
Knicks: at Celtics, Saturday, 7:30 p.m.; Spurs, Monday, 7:30 p.m.; Mavericks, Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.
Nets: Spurs, Sunday, noon; at Trail Blazers, Monday, 10 p.m.; at Bulls, Wednesday, 10 p.m.
UConn hockey: at Boston Coll., Saturday, 4 p.m.; at AIC, Tuesday, 7 p.m.; Boston Univ., Friday, 7 p.m.
Bruins: at Lightning, Saturday, 7 p.m.; at Capitals, Monday, 7 p.m.; Canadiens, Wednesday, 7 p.m.
Rangers: at Ducks, Saturday, 10 p.m.; at Kings, Monday, 10:30 p.m.; at Sharks, Thursday, 10:30 p.m.
Wolf Pack: at Utica, Saturday, 7 p.m.; Charlotte, Wednesday, 7 p.m.; at Providence, Friday, 7 p.m.

TV/RADIO

BASKETBALL
12 p.m.: Wichita State at Houston. (Live) CBS
12 p.m.: UConn at Seton Hall. (Live), FOX
12 p.m.: St. Johns at Providence. (Live) FS1
12 p.m.: Dayton at George Washington. (Live) USA
1 p.m.: Virginia at North Carolina. (Live) ESPN
2 p.m.: Texas at Oklahoma State. (Live) CBS
2 p.m.: Rhode Island at Davidson. (Live) CBSSN
2 p.m.: Villanova at DePaul. (Live) FS1
2 p.m.: VCU at La Salle. (Live) USA
2:30 p.m.: Michigan State at Michigan. (Live) FOX
4 p.m.: Nevada at San Diego State. (Live) CBS
4 p.m.: Boston College at Pittsburgh. (Live) ACC
4 p.m.: Saint Louis at St. Bonaventure. (Live) CBSSN
4 p.m.: Kansas at Texas Tech. (Live) ESPN2
6 p.m.: Northern Iowa at Missouri State. (Live) CBSSN
6 p.m.: Tennessee at LSU. (Live) ESPN2
7:30 p.m.: New York Knicks at Boston Celtics. (Live), MSG, NBCSB
8 p.m.: Utah State at New Mexico. (Live) CBSSN
8 p.m.: Florida at Auburn. (Live) ESPN2
10 p.m.: UNLV at Air Force. (Live) CBSSN
FOOTBALL
12 p.m.: FCS Division I Championship -- Montana State vs North Dakota State. (Live) ESPN2
1 p.m.: All-American Bowl. (Live) NBC
4:30 p.m.: Kansas City Chiefs at Denver Broncos. (Live) ABC ESPN
8:15 p.m.: Dallas Cowboys at Philadelphia Eagles. (Live) ABC ESPN
GOLF
6 p.m.: Sentry Tournament of Champions, Third Round. (Live) GOLF
HOCKEY
2 p.m.: Pittsburgh Penguins at Dallas Stars. (Live) SPRTNET NHL
4 p.m.: UConn at Boston College. (Live), NESNPlus.
7 p.m.: Toronto Maple Leafs at Colorado Avalanche. (Live) SPRTNET NHL
7 p.m.: Boston Bruins at Tampa Bay Lightning. (Live), NESN.
7 p.m.: Hartford Wolf Pack at Rochester Americans. (Live), Radio: 1410.
10 p.m.: New York Rangers at Anaheim Ducks. (Live), MSG2.
10 p.m.: Ottawa Senators at Vancouver Canucks. (Live) SPRTNET
SKATING
4 p.m.: Figure Skating U.S. Championships. (Live) NBC
7 p.m.: Figure Skating U.S. Championships: Pairs Free Skate & Free Dance. (Same-day Tape) USA
SOCCER
7:30 a.m.: FA Cup Soccer Bristol City vs Fulham. (Live) SPRTNET
10 a.m.: FA Cup Soccer Leicester City vs Watford. (Live) SPRTNET
6 p.m.: Mexico Primera Division Soccer Monterrey vs Querétaro. (Live) FS1
8 p.m.: Mexico Primera Division Soccer Santos Laguna vs Tigres UANL. (Live) FS1

Randle apologetic after fighting a battle he can't win with Knicks fans

By Steve Popper
Newsday


Julius Randle was quite clear about his thumbs down response to the MSG crowd on Thursday. **ADAM HUNGER/ AP**

NEW YORK — It might have seemed like a battle the Knicks couldn't win when they fell behind the Celtics by 25 points Thursday night at Madison Square Garden. That, it turned out, wasn't true. Evan Fournier's 41 points, Julius Randle's aggressive play and RJ Barrett's last-second prayer pulled out the improbable comeback victory.

The much harder fight came late in the game and afterward, when Randle let his frustrations boil over.

Midway through the fourth quarter, he gave the "thumbs down" signal to the fans who had turned their boos into cheers, and when asked about it after the game, he explained his message to the hometown fans as "Shut the [expletive] up."

On Friday night, he posted a kinder message on his Instagram account. He said in part: "I understand that my actions also represent the league, this organization, and the city, and that I should have handled things last night differently and expressed myself with more professionalism and more appropriate language in the heat of the moment. My comment was an example of how sometimes you say things you regret to people you love, even if it came from a place of passion and deep love.

"Nobody wants to win more than me and I will continue to show loyalty and dedication to my teammates, the entire Knicks organization, and the fans who have shown me and my family so much love . . . "

This is a battle that, even if Randle felt he got his message out Thursday, can't be won.

He signed a four-year extension this past summer after a career season in which he earned second-team All-NBA honors and was named the league's Most Improved Player. And last season, after fans were allowed in the Garden, he regularly was serenaded with chants of "M-V-P!"

But this season the Knicks have struggled to repeat their success, and Randle's production has not matched what he did last season. The Garden crowd and social media voices have not been kind. He's heard the talk that Obi Toppin should get some of his minutes on the court, and some even celebrated when he entered the NBA's health and safety protocols last week.

On Wednesday, he insisted he doesn't care about any opinions outside of the Knicks' locker room and front office. But on Thursday, he heard the boos, and when they turned to cheers as he and the Knicks played better en route to their 108-105 victory over Boston, he had had enough.

"Jules, getting to know him, he's an emotional guy," Fournier said. "Because he puts emotion into everything he does. I did not see what happened. He probably wasn't happy about that.

"Honestly, no big deal. If I were him, playing hard as hell, and he played well. So when you give everything you have into something and you give so much into something and it doesn't work out, or you're being called out, it's frustrating. But it's the business we're in. And Julius is the image of the franchise. He's the star player, so of course he's going to get more criticism. And I think he understands that."

Randle is not the first player to feel the frustration or to express it — not even the first in New York to attempt the exact same move during the last year, as Mets fans well know. But it's a war he can't win.

"I don't understand," Charles Barkley said on TNT after the game. "As a player, this is the way the thing works. We ain't doctors, we ain't lawyers. If you play good, people cheer you. If you play bad, people boo you. That's the deal you make with fans."

GIANTS

Rookie WR Toney's season over after playing 10 games

Courant news services

New York Giants first-round draft pick Kadarius Toney is probably going to head back home after the season ends this weekend and do his best to forget about his rookie year.

The 20th pick overall, Toney didn't have a bad season statistically in comparison to the rest of New York's underachieving receiving corps. His 39 catches for 420 yards rank second among Giants receivers in each category.

Toney's problem was staying on the field. The exciting Florida product on Friday was ruled out of Sunday's regular-season finale against Washington with a shoulder injury. He'll finish the having played in 10 of 17 games.

Toney dealt with COVID-19 before camp and late in the season. He also has had hamstring, ankle, thumb, quad and oblique issues, which have limited both his practices and games.

Earlier this week, coach Joe Judge said the problem many NFL rookies have is the season is longer and there are fewer breaks than in college. They need to learn how to manage their bodies and use the offseason to build muscle.

"In terms of Kadarius, he's had a number of injuries," Judge said. "I wouldn't say there's been anything that's been (big). They've all been legit injuries. There's nothing that he's stayed off the field for for an extended amount of time that he couldn't play through."

When he was healthy, Toney was a playmaker. His best game was against Dallas on Oct. 10 when he caught 10 passes for 189 yards and faked a couple of Cowboys defensive backs out of their cleats.

The end of the season was disappointing. He pulled an oblique against Tampa Bay on Nov. 22 and only played once the rest of the season, against Philadelphia on Dec. 26. That's when he picked up the shoulder injury that Judge says is not serious.

Elsewhere, the Giants also ruled out WR John Ross (knee) and QB Mike Glennon (wrist). OL Will Hernandez (ankle), WR Collin Johnson (hamstring) and FB Cullen Gillaspia (knee) are questionable. ... Friday was the team's final full practice of the regular season. It was held on the team's practice field after crews cleared away about five inches of snow that fell overnight. "Of course, guys had a little fun with the snow afterwards — diving in there, throwing snowballs around — but it was a typical Friday as far as practice," said cornerback James Bradberry.

— Associated Press

Bird

from Page 1

The 12-time All-Star, five-time All-WNBA First Team selection and three-time Second Team pick already said this summer that Tokyo was her last Olympics, where she took home her fifth gold medal with Team USA. Then, her emotional jersey swap with close friend Diana Taurasi in their playoff meeting this past September prompted many fans to fear they'd seen the last of Bird.

"I've been really trying to push away those thoughts," Bird said after that game. "This is the first offseason where I feel like I need to weigh it. This is the first time I'm going to sit back and see how I feel. I know for sure I want to let the emotion of the season die down."

If there was one bastion of hope, Bird had previously said that she'd like to finish her career on the Storm's home floor, Climate Pledge Arena, formerly known as Key Arena. The team hasn't played there since the 2018 season, the same year they won the franchise's third title, as the facility underwent a multi-year renovation project.

Bird was there for the arena's opening for Seattle Kraken games this winter. When asked about her potential retirement on the Manning brothers' "Monday Night Football" broadcast, she indicated playing there was still important to her.

"We just opened a new arena here in Seattle," Bird said at the time. "I happened to be in there the other day for the opening Kraken game. And it was tempting — the thoughts of playing there were very tempting. I'll leave you with that."

"I think it's great for the league that she's back for another year. I think it's tremendous for the people of Seattle. I know they're opening their new building that they're really excited about," Auriemma said. "I know that the fans probably had a huge impact in her decision. She means a lot to that town. She means a lot to the fans of that city. She means a lot to the franchise and she means a lot to the WNBA."

The Storm, who lost Breanna Stewart to a season-ending Achilles issue, fell in the second round of the 2021 playoffs to the Mercury. The team faces some big offseason questions with Stewart and Jewell Loyd both unrestricted free agents, but Bird will seek to help guide them to a third WNBA title in five years upon her return.

Alexa Philippou can be reached at aphilippou@courant.com

Patriots

from Page 1

The Patriots have failed to pressure opposing quarterbacks on even a quarter of their dropbacks since the bye. In the only game they eclipsed the 25% mark, their two-score loss to Buffalo after Christmas, the Pats never sacked Josh Allen. Judon came closest, clubbing the ball out of Allen's hand in the second half for an incomplete pass.

How does Judon explain his drought? Shaking off his disbelief, he said: "I think, as far as being a pass rusher, I'm still a pass rusher. But, you know, if a team like (the Colts) just comes out, runs the ball, that's just kinda what you gotta do. You gotta stop the run. ... So it is what it is. That's why I'm happy I have teammates."

One of those teammates, defensive tackle Davon Godchaux, relayed a phrase his college defensive line coach once imprinted on him about pass rushing: stop the run to have some fun.

Last week, the Patriots stopped the run by squashing Jacksonville with a 28-3 lead at halftime, but still failed to consistently impact rookie Trevor Lawrence in the second half. Relatedly, Judon was limited to 10 defensive snaps after a week when he missed every practice battling COVID.

On top of his restored health, Judon can take comfort in the fact little will be required of the Pats to stop the run Sunday.

The Dolphins own the league's third-worst rushing attack by DVOA, Football Outsiders' efficiency metric that adjusts for opponent quality and game situation. Furthermore, their offensive line can't stop a nosebleed in pass protection, ranked dead last by Pro Football Focus grades and sixth-worst by pressure rate at Sports Info. Solutions.

If there was ever a get-right game designed specifically for the Patriots' pass rush, a trip to Miami is it.

"I wanna be that guy, I wanna be the guy that everybody looks upon. But, sometimes, I might get blocked (differently) and then other guys step up," Judon said. "And I love what they do and I celebrate and enjoy (their) success as much as they celebrate and enjoy my success."

Success won't be defined strictly by sacks. Dolphins quarterback Tua Tagovailoa owns one of the fastest snap-to-throw times in the league, according to PFF. It's almost Brady-esque.

But if the Pats can merely move Tagovailoa in the pocket with a hurry, that will count as a win.

"If you can sack the quarterback, that's always great. But just getting him off the spot sometimes is always good," Goldchaux said Thursday. "Playing a young quarterback last week like Trevor Lawrence, get him a little bit rattled, force him to throw some bad throws ... if you can get him off his spot, that's good too."

In the season opener, the Patriots posted a 31% pressure rate against Tagovailoa and sacked him twice. Replicating those numbers Sunday would be a definitive sign of progress and hope for a defense that believes it's unmatched across the league.

SPORTS MEDIA

ESPN changes baseball show hosts

David Cone to join Sunday Night Baseball booth

By Matthew Roberson
New York Daily News

NEW YORK — For years, national baseball fans have complained that Sunday Night Baseball features the Yankees too often.

Now, the league's premier nationally televised broadcast will also sound more like a Yankees game.

ESPN announced on Friday that David Cone will be part of a revamped Sunday Night Baseball booth starting in 2022. Cone, who has been part of Yankee broadcasts on YES Network since 2011, will join Karl Ravech and Eduardo Perez for the weekly primetime games. He is expected to remain with YES in a reduced role.

"I'm very honored to be a part of this great team of professionals and become part of the ESPN family," Cone posted to his Twitter account on Friday.

The new hires come on the heels of Matt Vasgersian leaving ESPN. Vasgersian also does the play-by-play work on Angels' games for Bally Sports West and regularly calls games for MLB Network. Vasgersian's old partner, the inimitable Alex Rodriguez, is taking on a re-imagined role.

Per Ben Cafardo of ESPN corporate communications, A-Rod and Michael Kay will conduct their own broadcast on ESPN2 for eight of the Sunday Night Baseball games. Similar to the "Manningcast," in which Peyton and Eli Manning host various guests for a less buttoned-up, sports bar-style broadcasts of Monday Night Football, "Sunday Night Baseball with Kay-Rod" will provide an alternative viewing option that includes fantasy baseball banter, a smattering of analytics talk, and special guests of their own. Kay will stay in his current role at YES.

Rodriguez had been a color commentator on Sunday Night Baseball since 2018. Some of his highlights include coining a theory that even-run leads are better than odd numbered ones and a neverending yearning for bunts to make a comeback, despite being a steroid-tainted player who hit 696 home runs during his career. Jessica Mendoza, who shared the booth with Vasgersian and Rodriguez for two years, left before the 2020 season. It is currently unclear how Buster Olney, who has done the dugout reporting for Sunday Night Baseball for years, fits into ESPN's gameday plans.



SCOREBOARD

HOCKEY

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC	GP	W	L	OT	PTS	GF	GA
Tampa Bay	36	23	8	5	51	120	104
Florida	34	22	7	5	49	133	103
Toronto	32	22	8	2	46	108	78
Boston	30	17	11	2	36	87	79
Detroit	34	16	15	3	35	96	114
Buffalo	34	10	18	6	26	91	119
Ottawa	29	9	18	2	20	79	107
Montreal	34	7	23	4	18	73	123
METRO.	**GP**	**W**	**L**	**OT**	**PTS**	**GF**	**GA**
Washington	34	20	6	8	48	119	89
N.Y. Rangers	35	22	9	4	48	102	90
Carolina	31	23	7	1	47	106	66
Pittsburgh	33	20	8	5	45	110	86
New Jersey	35	14	16	5	33	102	122
Philadelphia	34	13	15	6	32	88	116
Columbus	32	15	16	1	31	102	115
N.Y. Islanders	28	10	12	6	26	64	80

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL	GP	W	L	OT	PTS	GF	GA
Nashville	35	22	11	2	46	108	93
St. Louis	34	19	10	5	43	119	96
Colorado	30	20	8	2	42	130	97
Minnesota	32	20	10	2	42	119	100
Winnipeg	33	16	12	5	37	99	99
Dallas	30	16	12	2	34	88	90
Chicago	34	11	18	5	27	81	118
Arizona	32	7	22	3	17	70	124
PACIFIC	**GP**	**W**	**L**	**OT**	**PTS**	**GF**	**GA**
Vegas	37	23	13	1	47	134	111
Anaheim	36	18	11	7	43	111	99
Calgary	32	17	9	6	40	101	77
Edmonton	34	18	14	2	38	113	111
Los Angeles	34	16	13	5	37	93	93
San Jose	35	18	16	1	37	99	110
Vancouver	34	16	15	3	35	89	95
Seattle	33	10	19	4	24	92	122

NOTE: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

FRIDAY'S RESULTS
Calgary at Carolina, late
Washington at St. Louis, late

SATURDAY'S GAMES
Pittsburgh at Dallas, 2p.m.
Boston at Tampa Bay, 7p.m.
Florida at Carolina, 7p.m.
New Jersey at Columbus, 7p.m.
San Jose at Philadelphia, 7p.m.
Toronto at Colorado, 7p.m.
Nashville at Arizona, 8p.m.
Washington at Minnesota, 8p.m.
Chicago at Vegas, 10p.m.
N.Y. Rangers at Anaheim, 10p.m.
Detroit at Los Angeles, 10:30p.m.
Ottawa at Vancouver, ppd
Buffalo at Montreal, ppd
Seattle at Winnipeg, ppd
N.Y. Islanders at Edmonton, ppd

SUNDAY'S GAMES
Dallas at St. Louis, 2p.m.
Detroit at Anaheim, 8p.m.

THURSDAY'S RESULTS
Pittsburgh 6, Philadelphia 2
New Jersey 3, Columbus 1
San Jose 3, Buffalo 2
Tampa Bay 4, Calgary 1
Minnesota 3, Boston 2
Dallas 6, Florida 5(SO)
Colorado 7, Winnipeg 1
Arizona 6, Chicago 4
Vegas 5, N.Y. Rangers 1
Nashville 4, Los Angeles 2
Toronto at Montreal, ppd
Ottawa at Seattle, ppd

SCORING LEADERS
Through Thursday

Skater, TEAM	GP	G	A	PTS
Connor McDavid, EDM	33	19	34	53
Leon Draisaitl, EDM	34	26	27	53
Alex Ovechkin, WSH	34	24	26	50
Jonathan Huberdeau, FLA	34	12	32	44

ODDS

COLLEGE BASKETBALL SATURDAY

FAVORITE	LINE	UNDERDOG
Purdue	8	at Penn St..
at Providence	4½	San Jose St.
at Seton Hall	2½	UConn
Dayton	8	at Geo. Wash.
at UMass	3½	Duquesne
at Vanderbilt	6½	South Carolina
at Houston	12½	Wichita St.
N. Dakota St	9½	at Omaha
Calif. Baptist	8½	at Chicago St.
at VMI	4½	UNC-Greensboro
at N. Carolina	6½	Virginia
at Rutgers	7	Nebraska
at Toledo	18½	N. Illinois
at W. Virginia	7	Kansas State
at Davidson	6	Rhode Island
at Wright St.	19½	IUPUI
Texas	3½	at Oklahoma St.
Villanova	7½	at DePaul
at Wake Forest	4	Syracuse
VCU	8	at La Salle
at Temple	3	East Carolina
at Michigan	2	Michigan St.
at Ga. Southern	3	Texas-Arlington
at La.-Monroe	2	Arkansas St.
at W. Kentucky	9½	FIU
Oral Roberts	1	at W. Illinois
at E. Michigan	2	Ball State
Alabama	13	at Missouri
at Chattanooga	14½	The Citadel
Wofford	2	at ETSU
at Furman	10½	Mercer
UAB	7½	at Rice
Louisiana Tech	13	at UTSA
Kansas	5	at Texas Tech
at N. Colorado	11	Sacramento St.
at Denver	7	N. Dakota
Murray State	12½	at SIU-Edwrdsvlle
at Utah Valley	12½	Dixie State
at Pittsburgh	3½	Boston College
at Tulane	8	South Florida
at Tennessee St.	1½	SE Missouri St.
at Loyola (Ill.)	13	Bradley
at CS Northridge	2½	Cal Poly
Belmont	17	at UT-Martin
at Troy	1½	Appalachian State
Morehead St.	9½	at Austn Peay
Baylor	9	at TCU
at Kentucky	21½	Georgia
at North Texas	11½	Middle Tennessee
at LSU	3½	Tennessee
at Missouri St.	6½	N. Iowa
at Oklahoma	6	Iowa St.
Notre Dame	1	at Georgia Tech
Washington St.	1½	at Utah
at E. Washington	12	Idaho
at Marshall	4½	FAU
at San Francisco	15	San Diego

NBA SATURDAY

FAVORITE	LINE	O/U	UNDERDOG
Memphis	3½	(215)	at LA Clippers
at Indiana	off	(off)	Utah
at Charlotte	off	(off)	Milwaukee
at Detroit	2½	(214)	Orlando
at Boston	6	(210)	New York
at Phoenix	off	(off)	Miami

COLLEGE FOOTBALL MONDAY

FAVORITE	SP	O/U	UNDERDOG
CFP National Championship Game			
Georgia	2½	(52½)	Alabama
FCS Playoffs Championship			**Saturday**
North Dakota St.	7½	(42)	Montana State

NHL SATURDAY

FAVORITE	LINE	UNDERDOG	Line
Pittsburgh	-130	at Dallas	+108
at Columbus	-162	New Jersey	+134
at Tampa Bay	-150	Boston	+130
at Colorado	-159	Toronto	+128
at Carolina	-133	Florida	+108
at Philadelphia	-110	San Jose	-110
Washington	-130	at Minnesota	+104
Nashville	-245	at Arizona	+205
at Vegas	-220	Chicago	+180
N.Y Rangers	-106	at Anaheim	-101
at Los Angeles	-150	Detroit	+130

NFL/WEEK 18 SATURDAY

FAVORITE	SP	O/U	UNDERDOG
Kansas City	10½	(45)	at Denver
Dallas	4	(43½)	at Phila.

SUNDAY

at Minnesota	5½	(43½)	Chicago
Washington	7	(38)	at NY Giants
Green Bay	3½	(44½)	at Detroit
Tennessee	10	(43)	at Houston
at Baltinore	3½	(41)	Pittsburgh
Indianapolis	15½	(44)	at Jacksonville
at Cleveland	6	(38)	Cincinnati
at Arizona	6½	(48)	Seattle
New Orleans	3½	(39½)	at Atlanta
at Buffalo	16½	(40½)	NY Jets
at LA Rams	4	(44½)	San Fran.
New England	6	(40)	at Miami
at Tampa Bay	8	(41½)	Carolina
LA Chargers	3	(49½)	at Las Vegas

For the latest odds, go to FanDuel Sportsbook, https://sportsbook.fanduel.com/

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC	W	L	PCT	GB
Brooklyn	24	12	.667	—
Philadelphia	21	16	.568	3 ½
Toronto	18	17	.514	5 ½
New York	19	20	.487	6 ½
Boston	18	21	.462	7 ½
SOUTHEAST	**W**	**L**	**PCT**	**GB**
Miami	24	15	.615	—
Charlotte	20	19	.513	4
Washington	19	19	.500	4 ½
Atlanta	17	20	.459	6
Orlando	7	32	.179	17
CENTRAL	**W**	**L**	**PCT**	**GB**
Chicago	25	10	.714	—
Milwaukee	25	15	.625	2 ½
Cleveland	21	17	.553	5 ½
Indiana	14	25	.359	13
Detroit	7	30	.189	19

WESTERN CONFERENCE

SOUTHWEST	W	L	PCT	GB
Memphis	26	14	.650	—
Dallas	20	18	.526	5
San Antonio	15	22	.405	9 ½
New Orleans	14	25	.359	11 ½
Houston	11	28	.282	14 ½
NORTHWEST	**W**	**L**	**PCT**	**GB**
Utah	28	10	.737	—
Denver	18	18	.500	9
Minnesota	18	20	.474	10
Portland	14	23	.378	13 ½
Oklahoma City	13	24	.351	14 ½
PACIFIC	**W**	**L**	**PCT**	**GB**
Phoenix	30	8	.789	—
Golden State	29	9	.763	1
L.A. Lakers	20	19	.513	10 ½
L.A. Clippers	19	20	.487	11 ½
Sacramento	16	24	.400	15

FRIDAY'S RESULTS
San Antonio at Philadelphia, late
Milwaukee at Brooklyn, late
Utah at Toronto, late
Dallas at Houston, late
Minnesota at Oklahoma City, late
Washington at Chicago, late
Sacramento at Denver, late
Atlanta at L.A. Lakers, late
Cleveland at Portland, late

SATURDAY'S GAMES
Memphis at L.A. Clippers, 3:30p.m.
Milwaukee at Charlotte, 7p.m.
Orlando at Detroit, 7p.m.
Utah at Indiana, 7p.m.
New York at Boston, 7:30p.m.
Miami at Phoenix, 9p.m.

SUNDAY'S GAMES
San Antonio at Brooklyn, 12p.m.
Atlanta at L.A. Clippers, 3:30p.m.
New Orleans at Toronto, 6p.m.
Washington at Orlando, 6p.m.
Denver at Oklahoma City, 7p.m.
Minnesota at Houston, 7p.m.
Chicago at Dallas, 7:30p.m.
Cleveland at Golden State, 8:30p.m.
Sacramento at Portland, 9p.m.
Memphis at L.A. Lakers, 9:30p.m.

THURSDAY'S RESULTS
New York 108, Boston 105
Memphis 118, Detroit 88
New Orleans 101, Golden State 96
Phoenix 106, L.A. Clippers 89

NFL

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

EAST	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
x-Buffalo	10	6	0	.625	456	279
x-New England	10	6	0	.625	438	270
e-Miami	8	8	0	.500	308	349
e-N.Y. Jets	4	12	0	.250	300	477
SOUTH	**W**	**L**	**T**	**PCT**	**PF**	**PA**
y-Tennessee	11	5	0	.688	391	329
Indianapolis	9	7	0	.563	440	339
e-Houston	4	12	0	.250	255	424
e-Jacksonville	2	14	0	.125	227	446
NORTH	**W**	**L**	**T**	**PCT**	**PF**	**PA**
y-Cincinnati	10	6	0	.625	444	355
Pittsburgh	8	7	1	.531	327	385
Baltimore	8	8	0	.500	374	376
e-Cleveland	7	9	0	.438	328	355
WEST	**W**	**L**	**T**	**PCT**	**PF**	**PA**
y-Kansas City	11	5	0	.688	452	340
L.A. Chargers	9	7	0	.563	442	424
Las Vegas	9	7	0	.563	339	407
e-Denver	7	9	0	.438	311	294

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

EAST	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
y-Dallas	11	5	0	.688	479	332
Philadelphia	9	7	0	.563	418	334
e-Washington	6	10	0	.375	313	427
e-N.Y. Giants	4	12	0	.250	251	394
SOUTH	**W**	**L**	**T**	**PCT**	**PF**	**PA**
y-Tampa Bay	12	4	0	.750	470	336
New Orleans	8	8	0	.500	334	315
e-Atlanta	7	9	0	.438	293	429
e-Carolina	5	11	0	.313	287	363
NORTH	**W**	**L**	**T**	**PCT**	**PF**	**PA**
z-Green Bay	13	3	0	.813	420	334
e-Minnesota	7	9	0	.438	394	409
e-Chicago	6	10	0	.375	294	376
e-Detroit	2	13	1	.156	288	437
WEST	**W**	**L**	**T**	**PCT**	**PF**	**PA**
x-L.A. Rams	12	4	0	.750	436	345
x-Arizona	11	5	0	.688	419	328
San Francisco	9	7	0	.563	400	341
e-Seattle	6	10	0	.375	357	336

e-eliminated from playoffs, x-clinched playoff spot, y-clinched division z-clinched home-field advantage

WEEK 18
SATURDAY'S GAMES
Kansas City at Denver, 4:30p.m.
Dallas at Philadelphia, 8:15p.m.

SUNDAY'S GAMES
Chicago at Minnesota, 1p.m.
Cincinnati at Cleveland, 1p.m.
Green Bay at Detroit, 1p.m.
Indianapolis at Jacksonville, 1p.m.
Pittsburgh at Baltimore, 1p.m.
Tennessee at Houston, 1p.m.
Washington at N.Y. Giants, 1p.m.
Carolina at Tampa Bay, 4:25p.m.
N.Y. Jets at Buffalo, 4:25p.m.
New England at Miami, 4:25p.m.
New Orleans at Atlanta, 4:25p.m.
San Francisco at L.A. Rams, 4:25p.m.
Seattle at Arizona, 4:25p.m.
L.A. Chargers at Las Vegas, 8:20p.m.
End of regular season

SOCCER

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

CLUB	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
Man City	21	17	2	2	53	13	53
Chelsea	21	12	7	2	45	16	43
Liverpool	20	12	6	2	52	18	42
Arsenal	20	11	2	7	33	25	35
West Ham	20	10	4	6	37	27	34
Tottenham	18	10	3	5	23	20	33
Man United	19	9	4	6	30	27	31
Wolverhampton	19	8	4	7	14	14	28
Brighton	19	6	9	4	20	20	27
Leicester	18	7	4	7	31	33	25
Crystal Palace	20	5	8	7	29	30	23
Brentford	19	6	5	8	23	26	23
Aston Villa	19	7	1	11	25	30	22
Southampton	19	4	9	6	20	29	21
Everton	18	5	4	9	23	32	19
Leeds	19	4	7	8	21	37	19
Watford	18	4	1	13	22	36	13
Burnley	17	1	8	8	16	27	11
Newcastle	19	1	8	10	19	42	11
Norwich	19	2	4	13	8	42	10

TUESDAY'S MATCHES
Southampton vs. Brentford, 2:45p.m.
Everton vs. Leicester, 3p.m.

WEDNESDAY'S MATCH
West Ham vs. Norwich, 2:45p.m.

FRIDAY, JAN. 14
Brighton vs. Crystal Palace, 3p.m.

SATURDAY, JAN. 15
Man City vs. Chelsea, 7:30a.m.
Burnley vs. Leicester, 10a.m.
Newcastle vs. Watford, 10a.m.
Norwich vs. Everton, 10a.m.
Wolverhampton vs. Southampton, 10 a.m.
Aston Villa vs. Man United, 12:30p.m.

SUNDAY, JAN. 16
Liverpool vs. Brentford, 9a.m.
West Ham vs. Leeds, 9a.m.
Tottenham vs. Arsenal, 11:30a.m.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

MEN'S AP TOP 25 FARED
No. 1 Baylor (14-0) did not play. Next: at TCU, Saturday.
No. 2 Duke (12-1) did not play. Next: vs. Miami, Saturday.
No. 3 Purdue (12-2) did not play. Next: at Penn St., Saturday.
No. 4 Gonzaga (11-2) did not play. Next: vs. Pepperdine, Saturday.
No. 5 UCLA (9-1) did not play. Next: at California, Saturday.
No. 6 Kansas (12-1) did not play. Next: at No. 25 Texas Tech, Saturday.
No. 7 Southern Cal (13-0) did not play. Next: vs. Oregon St., Thursday.
No. 8 Arizona (12-1) did not play. Next: Arizona St., Saturday.
No. 9 Auburn (13-1) did not play. Next: vs. Florida, Saturday.
No. 10 Michigan St. (13-2) did not play. Next: at Michigan, Saturday.
No. 11 Iowa St. (13-1) did not play. Next: at Oklahoma, Saturday.
No. 12 Houston (13-2) did not play. Next: vs. Wichita St., Saturday.
No. 13 Ohio St. (9-3) did not play. Next: vs. Northwestern, Sunday.
No. 14 Texas (12-2) did not play. Next: at Oklahoma St., Saturday.
No. 15 Alabama (10-3) did not play. Next: at Missouri, Saturday.
No. 16 Kentucky (11-3) did not play. Next: vs. Georgia, Saturday.
No. 16 Providence (13-2) did not play. Next: vs. St. John's, Saturday.
No. 18 Tennessee (10-3) did not play. Next: at No. 21 LSU, Saturday.
No. 19 Villanova (10-4) did not play. Next: at DePaul, Saturday.
No. 20 Colorado St. (11-0) did not play. Next: at San Diego St., Saturday.
No. 21 LSU (13-1) did not play. Next: vs. No. 18 Tennessee, Saturday.
No. 22 Xavier (11-2) at Butler. Next: vs. No. 19 Villanova, Wednesday.
No. 23 Wisconsin (12-2) did not play. Next: at Maryland, Sunday.
No. 24 Seton Hall (10-3) did not play. Next: vs. UConn, Saturday.
No. 25 Texas Tech (10-3) did not play. Next: vs. No. 6 Kansas, Saturday.

FRIDAY'S SCORES
SOUTH
Northwestern St. 83, Incarnate Word 80
SOUTHWEST
New Orleans 81, Houston Baptist 65
WEST
Hawaii Hilo 85, Holy Names 78

MEN'S SCORING LEADERS

PLAYER	SCHOOL	PTS
Keegan Murray	Iowa	24.7
Jonathan Davis	Wisconsin	22.6
Kofi Cockburn	Illinois	22.5
Max Abmas	Oral Roberts	22.3
Antoine Davis	Detroit Mercy	22.2
Julian Champagnie	St. John's	21.5
Darius McGhee	Liberty	21.5
Terrell Brown	Washington	21.4
Jamal Cain	Oakland	21.3
Michael Devoe	Georgia Tech	21.2
Kendric Davis	SMU	21.1
Antonio Reeves	Illinois St.	21.1
Ty Gordon	Nicholls State	21.0
Taz Sherman	West Virginia	20.9
Peter Kiss	Bryant	20.6
J Freeman-Liberty	DePaul	20.6
Malachi Smith	Chattanooga	20.4
Ochai Agbaji	Kansas	20.2
Alondes Williams	Wake Forest	20.1
Jahmir Young	Charlotte	20.1
Tanner Holden	Wright State	19.5
Jordan Dingle	Pennsylvania	20.0

WOMEN'S AP TOP 25 FARED
No. 1. South Carolina (14-1) did not play. Next: vs. No. 21 Kentucky, Sunday.
No. 2. Stanford (9-3) vs. Oregon. Next: at Colorado, Friday, Jan. 14.
No. 3. Louisville (13-1) did not play. Next: at Miami, Sunday.
No. 4. Arizona (10-0) vs. Washington St. Next: at Southern California, Sunday.
No. 5. NC State (13-2) did not play. Next: at No. 20 Notre Dame, Sunday.
No. 6. Indiana (12-2) did not play. Next: vs. Nebraska, Thursday, Jan. 13.
No. 7. Tennessee (14-1) did not play. Next: at Mississippi, Sunday.
No. 8. Michigan (12-2) did not play. Next: vs. Rutgers, Sunday.
No. 9. Texas (10-2) did not play. Next: at No. 14 Baylor, Sunday.
No. 10. Maryland (11-4) did not play. Next: at Minnesota, Sunday.
No. 11. UConn (6-3) did not play. Next: vs. Creighton, Sunday.
No. 12. Iowa St. (13-1) did not play. Next: vs. TCU, Saturday.
No. 13. LSU (14-2) did not play. Next: at Auburn, Sunday.
No. 14. Baylor (10-3) did not play. Next: vs. No. 9 Texas, Sunday.
No. 15. Georgia (12-3) did not play. Next: vs. Alabama, Sunday.
No. 16. Georgia Tech (10-3) did not play. Next: vs. Virginia, Sunday.
No. 17. Duke (10-2) did not play. Next: at Syracuse, Sunday.
No. 18. BYU (11-1) did not play. Next: vs. Pacific, Saturday.
No. 19. North Carolina (13-1) did not play. Next: vs. Virginia Tech, Sunday.
No. 20. Notre Dame (11-3) did not play. Next: vs. No. 5 NC State, Sunday.
No. 21. Kentucky (8-3) did not play. Next: at No. 1 South Carolina, Sunday.
No. 22. Iowa (7-4) did not play. Next: at Nebraska, Sunday.
No. 23. Oklahoma (12-2) did not play. Next: at Kansas, Saturday.
No. 24. South Florida (11-4) did not play. Next: vs. Wichita St., Sunday.
No. 25. Texas A&M (10-4) did not play. Next: vs. Florida, Sunday.

FRIDAY'S SCORES
SOUTH
Middle Tennessee 87, Rice 63
MIDWEST
Youngstown St. 2, Wright St. 0

TENNIS

ATP GREAT OCEAN ROAD OPEN
Friday at Melbourne Park, Melbourne, Australia, outdoors-hard
MEN'S SINGLES, QUARTERFINALS
#1Rafael Nadal d. Tallon Griekspoor, walkover.
#3Grigor Dimitrov d. Botic van de Zandschulp, 6-7 (5), 6-0, 7-5.
Emil Ruusuvuori d. Alex Molcan, 6-2, 6-1.
Maxime Cressy d. Jaume Munar, 7-6(3), 6-4.

ADELAIDE INTERNATIONAL
Friday at Memorial Drive Tennis Centre, Australia, outdoors-hard
WOMEN'S SINGLES, QUARTERFINALS
#1Ashleigh Barty d. #6Sofia Kenin (6), 6-3, 6-4.
#5Iga Swiatek Poland, d. Victoria Azarenka, 6-3, 2-6, 6-1.#7 Elena Rybakina d. Shelby Rogers, 3-6, 6-3, 6-2.
Misaki Doi d. Kaja Juvan, 6-3, 4-6, 7-6(5).

WTA YARRA VALLEY CLASSIC
Friday at Melbourne Park, Melbourne, Australia, outdoors-hard
WOMEN'S SINGLES, QUARTERFINALS
#1Naomi Osaka d. Andrea Petkovic, 6-1, 7-5.
#2Simona Halep d. #6Viktorija Golubic, 6-2, 5-7, 6-4.
#3Veronika Kudermetova d. Anastasia Potapova, 6-2, 4-6, 6-0.
Qinwen Zheng d. Ana Konjuh, 7-6(1), 7-6(6).

ATP MURRAY RIVEROPEN
Friday at Melbourne Park; Melbourne, Australia; outdoors-hard
MEN'S SINGLES, QUARTERFINALS
#1Gael Monfils (1) d. #6Tommy Paul (6), 6-4, 6-1.
#2Karen Khachanov d. Egor Gerasimov, 7-5, 6-3.
#3Marin Cilic d. #7Laslo Djere (7), 6-3, 6-2.
Thanasi Kokkinakis d. Mikael Ymer, 7-6(9), 4-6, 6-4.

WTA GIPPSLAND TROPHY
Friday at Melbourne Park, Melbourne, Australia, outdoors-hard
WOMEN'S SINGLES, QUARTERFINALS
#3Daria Kasatkina d. Nuria Parrizas Diaz, 7-5, 6-1.
Aliaksandra Sasnovich d. #6Clara Tauson, 6-3, 2-0, retired.
#7 Ann Li d. Kamilia Rakhimova, 6-1, 7-5.
Amanda Anisimova d. Irina-Camelia Begu, 2-6, 6-3, 6-2.

GOLF

LATE THURSDAY:
PGA TOUR SENTRY TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS
1st of 4 rounds; Kapalua Plantation GC, Kapalua, Maui, Hawaii, 7,596 yds; Par 73

Cameron Smith	33-32—65	-8
Daniel Berger	31-35—66	-7
Jon Rahm	33-33—66	-7
Patrick Cantlay	35-31—66	-7
Erik van Rooyen	31-36—67	-6
Kevin Na	34-33—67	-6
Sungjae Im	33-34—67	-6
Garrick Higgo	32-36—68	-5
Joel Dahmen	34-34—68	-5
Brooks Koepka	33-35—68	-5
Talor Gooch	32-36—68	-5
Collin Morikawa	35-33—68	-5
Viktor Hovland	32-37—69	-4
Kevin Kisner	36-33—69	-4
Lucas Herbert	35-34—69	-4
Marc Leishman	34-35—69	-4
Stewart Cink	34-35—69	-4
Cam Davis	37-32—69	-4
Branden Grace	35-34—69	-4
Bryson DeChambeau	35-34—69	-4
Hideki Matsuyama	35-34—69	-4
Xander Schauffele	34-35—69	-4
Matt Jones	36-34—70	-3
Tony Finau	37-33—70	-3
Seamus Power	36-35—71	-2
Si Woo Kim	36-35—71	-2
Phil Mickelson	36-35—71	-2
Jordan Spieth	36-35—71	-2
Abraham Ancer	34-38—72	-1
Jason Kokrak	37-35—72	-1
Max Homa	34-38—72	-1
Sam Burns	36-36—72	-1
Billy Horschel	35-37—72	-1
K.H. Lee	35-37—72	-1
Harris English	38-35—73	E
Lucas Glover	37-37—74	+1
Patrick Reed	38-36—74	+1
Justin Thomas	38-36—74	+1

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

UPCOMING BOWLS
MONDAY'S FINAL
CFP Championship Game, Indianapolis
Alabama (13-1) vs. Georgia (13-1), 8 p.m.

NCAA FCS CHAMPIONSHIP
Saturday's final
Toyota Stadium, Frisco, Texas
North Dakota State (13-1) vs. Montana State (12-2), noon

PAST BOWL RESULTS
FRIDAY, DEC. 17
Bahamas BowlNassau, Bahamas
Middle Tennessee 31, Toledo 24
Cure Bowl, Orlando, Fla.
Coastal Carolina 47, Northern Illinois 41

SATURDAY, DEC. 18
Boca Raton Bowl, Boca Raton, Fla.
W. Kentucky 59, Appalahican St. 38
Celebration Bowl, Atlanta
S. Carolina St. 31, Jackson St. 10
New Mexico Bowl, Albuquerque
Fresno State 31, UTEP 24
Independence Bowl, Shreveport, La.
Ala-Birmingham 31, #13BYU 28
LendingTree Bowl, Mobile, Ala.
Liberty 56, Eastern Michigan 20
LA Bowl, Inglewood, Calif.
Utah St. 24, Oregon State 13
New Orleans Bowl, New Orleans
#16 La-Lafayette 36, Marshall 21e

MONDAY, DEC. 20
Myrtle Beach Bowl, Conway, S.C.
Tulsa 30, Old Dominion 17

TUESDAY, DEC. 21
Famous Idaho Potato, Boise, Idaho
Wyoming 52, Kent State 38
Frisco Bowl, Frisco, Texas
San Diego State 38, #24 UTSA 24

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 22
Armed Forces Bowl, Fort Worth, Texas
Army 24, Missouri 22

THURSDAY, DEC. 23
Frisco Football Classic, Frisco, Texas
Miami (Ohio) 27, North Texas 14
Gasparilla Bowl, Tampa, Fla.
UCF 29, Florida 17

FRIDAY, DEC. 24
Hawaii Bowl, Honolulu
Memphis (6-6) vs. Hawaii (6-7), ccd.

SATURDAY, DEC. 25
Camellia Bowl, Montgomery, Ala.
Georgia St. 51, Ball State 20

MONDAY, DEC. 27
Quick Lane Bowl
Western Michigan 52, Nevada 24
Military Bowl, Annapolis, Md.
Boston Coll. (6-6) vs. E. Carolina (7-5), ccd.

TUESDAY, DEC. 28
Birmingham Bowl, Birmingham, Ala.
#20 Houston 17, Auburn 13
SERVPRO First Responder Bowl, Dallas
Air Force 31, Louisville 28
Liberty Bowl, Memphis, Tenn.
Texas Tech 34, Mississippi State 7
Guaranteed Rate Bowl, Phoenix
Minnesota 18, West Virginia 6
Holiday Bowl, San Diego
UCLA (8-4) vs. NC State (9-3), ccd.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 29
Pinstripe Bowl, New York City
Maryland 54, Virginia Tech 10
Cheez-It Bowl, Orlando, Fla.
#19Clemson 20, Iowa State 13
Alamo Bowl, San Antonio
#16 Oklahoma 47, #14 Oregon 32
Fenway Bowl, Boston
Virginia (6-6) vs. SMU (8-4), ccd

THURSDAY, DEC. 30
Duke's Mayo Bowl, Charlotte, N.C.
South Carolina 38, North Carolina 21
Music City Bowl, Nashville
Purdue 48, Tennessee 45(OT)
Peach Bowl, Atlanta
#10 Michigan State 31, #12 Pittsburgh 21
Las Vegas Bowl, Las Vegas
Wisconsin 20, Arizona State 13

FRIDAY, DEC. 31
College Football Playoff Semifinal (Cotton Bowl Classic), Arlington, Texas
#1Alabama 27, #4Cincinnati 6
College Football Playoff Semifinal (Orange Bowl), Miami Gardens, Fla.
#3 Georgia 34, #2 Michigan 11
Gator Bowl, Jacksonville, Fla.
#17Wake Forest 38, Rutgers 10
Sun Bowl, El Paso, Texas
Cent. Michigan 24, Washington State 21
Arizona Bowl, Tucson, Ariz., ccd.

SATURDAY, JAN. 1
Outback Bowl, Tampa, Fla.
#21 Arkansas 24, Penn State 10
Citrus Bowl, Orlando, Fla.
#21 Kentucky 20, #15 Iowa 17
Fiesta Bowl, Glendale, Ariz.
#9Oklahoma St. 37, #5Notre Dame 35
Rose Bowl, Pasadena, Calif.
#6 Ohio State 48, #11 Utah 45
Sugar Bowl, New Orleans
#7Baylor 21, #8Mississippi 7

TUESDAY, JAN. 4
Texas Bowl, Houston
Kansas State 42, LSU 20

CONFERENCE BOWL RECORDS

CONFERENCE (TEAMS)	REC	WI%
American Athletic (4)	3-1	.750
Atlantic Coast (6)	2-4	.333
Big 1212(7)	5-2	.714
Big Ten (10)	6-4	.600
Conference

MEN'S BASKETBALL
Saturday: at Seton Hall, noon, FOX

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
Sunday: vs. Creighton (at Gampel), 1 p.m., SNY

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UCONN BASKETBALL

Recruit Karaban enrolls early, joins men's program

By Dom Amore
Hartford Courant

Alex Karaban, a versatile forward who committed to UConn men's basketball last summer, has enrolled at UConn early and will join the program this month.

Karaban accelerated his graduation from IMG Academy in Bradenton, Florida, and will be able to practice and travel with the Huskies for the rest of this season. He is not expected to play until next season.

He joins Corey Floyd Jr., who graduated a year early from high school and came to UConn in the fall. Floyd is redshirting this season. Karaban will follow the same path as current UConn redshirt junior Akok Akok, who enrolled for the second semester in 2018-19 but did not play in any games and made an immediate impact as a redshirt freshman in 2019-20.

Karaban, a 6-foot-8, 210-pounder from Northborough, Massachusetts, went to IMG Academy after two years at New Hampton (N.H.) School. He was named the Gatorade New Hampshire Player of the Year last season after averaging 25.8 points, 8.7 rebounds, 2.9 assists, 1.9 blocks and shooting 60.3 percent to lead New Hampton to the New England Prep School Athletic Council Class AAA tournament championship. He's considered a top-50 recruit from the Class of 2022 by most analysts.

Karaban also played for AAU's Expressions Elite, averaging 18.4 points, 7.4 rebounds, 2.4 assists and 1.6 blocks and earned selection to the All-Peach Jam Second Team.



UConn commit Alex Karaban is the 45th recruit in ESPN's class of 2022 rankings. **COURTESY**

Karaban, Floyd and Bristol Central 7-2 center Donovan Clingan were originally ranked as a top 10 recruiting class for UConn before Floyd and Karaban elected to enroll early.

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COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Georgia, Alabama boosted by prized transfer portal pickups

Associated Press

Georgia and Alabama have used the transfer portal to supplement their annual bounties of top recruits.

Sure, virtually every college football team has utilized the portal to bolster rosters. But Alabama and Georgia did what they do, landing talented gems to help lead them to a national championship.

The top-ranked Crimson Tide filled two big needs with deep threat wide receiver Jameson Williams from Ohio State and savvy middle linebacker Henry To'oTo'o from rival Tennessee.

Georgia helped fill a gaping void in its secondary with former Clemson cornerback Derion Kendrick. The pick-ups have played significant roles in their teams' road to the College Football Playoff championship game Monday night in Indianapolis.

Other teams had much bigger transfer hauls, but also more spots to fill.

Georgia and Alabama were choice destinations for a few top transfers who, like some NFL free agents, want to play for another contender. And were good enough to start for the powerhouse programs.

"You know, it is similar to free agency but without the rules, to be honest with you," said Alabama offensive coordinator Bill O'Brien, a former Houston Texans head coach. "There are some rules in college, but the portal is an interesting deal."

And a gold mine for his offense, which had to replace Heisman Trophy-winning receiver DeVonta Smith and fellow NFL first-rounder Jaylen Waddle.

Alabama's offense would not be as potent without the All-American Williams, who had seven catches for 184 yards and two touchdowns against the Bulldogs in the Southeastern Conference championship game. Said O'Brien, "Obviously he's a huge part of our success."

The Tide have already landed LSU cornerback Eli Ricks and Georgia Tech running back Jahmyr Gibbs to fortify those positions next season.

After catching 15 passes for 266 yards and three touchdowns in two seasons with the Buckeyes, the speedy Williams emerged this season as a likely first-round NFL draft pick whenever he turns pro.

Williams essentially quintupled those two-year numbers with 75 catches for 1,507 yards and 15 touchdowns to earn first-team AP All-America honors.

Williams left the receiving logjam at Ohio State to play for a team where he could get more opportunities. He said the Tide's recruiting pitch was "that I would be an excellent add-on to the offense."

"And as the season went on, we kind of all saw how I was used in the offense and everything," Williams said. "Complemented me, complemented the other receivers. We all just came together and we had a great offense this year."

Kendrick fit right into the nation's top defense at Georgia.

He arrived in Athens after earning first-team All-Atlantic Coast Conference honors at Clemson and has started all 14 games for Georgia. The Bulldogs had lost four starters in the secondary and six other defensive backs.

They also signed West Virginia's Tykee Smith, a third-team AP All-American in 2020 who only played in one game because of injuries.

Kendrick, meanwhile, intercepted two passes in the Orange Bowl against Michigan to earn defensive MVP honors.

Unlike Williams and To'oTo'o, off-the-field issues at Clemson left him looking for a new team. Kendrick missed three games last season and was dismissed after being arrested in Rock Hill, South Carolina. He was charged with unlawful possession of a gun and simple possession of marijuana.

Men

from Page 1

"I think we will just limit them in terms of minutes," Hurley said.

The Huskies' roster is fully vaccinated, and recently many of the players have received their booster shot. After two cancellations, Hurley expects to play all of their games the remainder of the season.

"Unless the other six guys get it [COVID-19] all the same day, even if we are limited in having seven or eight guys, we should be good to go from here on out hopefully."

UConn will have a big road test against Seton Hall which has one of the deepest rosters in the Big East and will have their full roster available. The Pirates are one of only four programs in the country with multiple wins over top-10 teams this season and are coming off of their first Big East victory of the season, a 71-56 win at Butler on Jan. 4.

If the Huskies were to win, it would be their third quadrant 1 win, making them 3-2 for the year.

For Hurley, an alumnus of Seton Hall, this game is always special. Hurley lettered at Seton Hall from 1991-96, played on three NCAA Tournament teams, scored 1,070 points and ranks ninth on the program's assist list with 437.

"That area means to me every time I come back there. ... It always means a lot to me," he said.

Here's everything you need to know about Saturday's matchup.

Shreyas Laddha can be reached at sladdha@courant.com.

The basics

UConn vs. Seton Hall

Time: 12 p.m., Saturday
Place: Prudential Center (Newark, N.J.)
Series: UConn leads 46-19
Last meeting: UConn won, 69-58, on Mar. 3 2021 at the Prudential Center
TV: Fox (Tim Brando and Donny Marshall)
Live Stream: Fox Sports app
Radio: UConn Sports Network (Mike Crispino, Wayne Norman). Sirius-83. XM-385. SXM-app-975. 97.9-ESPN Hartford. WILI-1400-AM (Willimantic). WATR-1320-AM (Waterbury). WAVZ-1300-AM (New Haven). WGCH-1490-AM (Greenwich).

No.24 Seton Hall (10-3,1-2) probable starters, sixth man
Bryce Aiken, G, 6-0, Gr.; Tray Jackson, F, 6-9, Jr.; Alexis Yetna, F, 6-8, Gr.; Jared Rhoden, G, 6-6, Sr.; Myles Cale, G, 6-6, Gr.; Kadary Richmond, G, 6-6, So.
UConn (10-3,1-1) probable starters, sixth man
R.J. Cole, G, 6-1, GS; Isaiah Whaley, F, 6-9, GS; ; Akok Akok, F, 6-9, R-Jr.; Tyrese Martin, G/F, 6-6, Sr.; Andre Jackson, G/F, 6-6, So.; Jordan Hawkins, G, 6-5, Fr.

The matchup

UConn offense: The UConn offense will need to play with pace and make sure to not start slow offensively.
UConn defense: The guard defense need to be good and not allow easy drives to the rim.

Seton Hall offense: Jared Rhoden leads Seton Hall in scoring with 16.4 points a game. Seton Hall has three scorers in double figures in Rhoden, Aiken (12.2) and Samuel (10.8).
Seton Hall defense: UConn needs to take care of the ball against a Seton Hall team that has over four players averaging 1.5 steals per game. The Pirates have held eight of their first 13 opponents to 65 points or less and currently rank 22nd in adjusted defensive efficiency by KenPom.

UConn's key: Don't tire out and get down big against a Seton Hall squad filled with depth.
Player to watch: Martin. The senior guard had his best game of the season against Marquette after scoring a career-high 25 points and grabbing six rebounds. It's important to see if he can keep that momentum going against Seton Hall.

About Seton Hall's coach: Kevin Willard has been Seton Hall's coach for 11 years. In that span, he has coached them to six 20-win seasons. With Seton Hall's win over Rutgers on Dec. 12, Willard passed P.J. Carlesimo (213 wins) and is now in sole possession of second on Seton Hall's all-time wins list.
Seton Hall mascot: The mascot is a Pirate, which was chosen in 1931.
Seton Hall famous alumni: NBA Hall of Famer Bob Davies.

Women

from Page 1

Though freshman Amari DeBerry plans to dress this weekend, Auriemma said she is not ready to go and "it might take her a little bit of time" to make her return. He said she was dealing with some "other issues" prior to getting COVID-19, so she is still making her way back. Sophomore Piath Gabriel will not dress for the game, the school clarified after Auriemma's remarks.

Sophomore Azzi Fudd and junior Aubrey Griffin are still on the injured reserve. Auriemma said Friday he hopes Fudd (foot) will be able to start running next week, while Griffin is dealing with a disk injury in her back.

Griffin, a key bench piece her previous two years on the team, has yet to make her season debut. Auriemma said she might not be able to return at all for the 2021-22 campaign.

"There's a good possibility that she's going to need surgery on that," Auriemma said, "and I don't envision her being back the rest of the season."

Auriemma and redshirt senior Evina Westbrook admitted the team is still in the process of developing an identity in light of Paige Bueckers' absence primarily, but also so many other rotation changes. In the three games the Huskies played without Bueckers, Auriemma saw "a lot" of improvement in the latter six quarters of play, including in the team's 69-64 loss to current No. 3 Louisville on Dec. 19.

But throw in an extended break from game play thanks to COVID-19, and Auriemma doesn't know what to expect from the team when it takes the court Sunday.

Up until this week, the team typically had just five or six players able to practice, the coach said. Practice players weren't around since school wasn't in session. The Huskies tried to work on fundamentals and play as much 3-vs-3 or 4-vs-4 as possible, but nothing truly mimics game play aside from actual games.

"It's a really challenging situation," Auriemma said. "And then to not be able to play for 20 days or whatever it is, you're going into Sunday's game almost like it's the beginning of the season, almost like it's the first game of the year."

"It has been a test with everything going on," Westbrook added, "but I think we've all handled it pretty well."

Westbrook has also seen some improvement in the team's communication and movement on offense over the past few weeks, something the team realizes the coaches have been correct in harping on. The challenge now, according to Westbrook, is to "listen and lock in."

"I think a lot of times we can get stagnant and people are just confused on where to go or the next move," Westbrook said. "So moving and communication have been a huge emphasis since we've been back from Christmas."

The challenges are more than just physical, though. With so much uncertainty, upheaval and risk-assessment needed on a daily basis due to COVID-19, Auriemma seems worn down.

"All the things that made coaching what it was, to me personally, it's no longer that," Auriemma said.

"I don't know that there's any joy in that. I don't know that there's any fun in that," he added. "You're not doing the same job you used to do based on these past two years. I think every coach has had to figure out a way to to deal with it and some deal with it better than others. Some players deal with it better than others, but I don't think anyone's been unaffected and feels like 'I'm in good shape, I've made it through this okay.' Everyone's been affected, and it's all negative. I don't know there's one positive aspect that's come out of these past two years for anybody."

The Huskies also had a plethora of COVID-19 disruptions in the 2020-21 season, although they were still able to play 25 games prior to the NCAA Tournament. So far this year, UConn has played just nine games, which ranks in the 25th percentile for Division I women's teams across the country.

"It's very difficult to have that feeling of you're building toward something," Auriemma said. "I think a lot of teams probably don't look as good as they probably could look, and I don't think that it's a lack of effort. I think it's just a lack of the focus and the energy. I'm sure people see it at home, they see it at work. Teachers see it in school. There's kind of a fog that a lot of us are operating under, and that more than anything, I think, has been the biggest struggle for me personally."

Auriemma's despondency didn't seem to trickle down to his players. Westbrook, the de facto team mom, said players are trying to be there for each other and stay together, while also not letting the disruptions of the pandemic weigh on them too much.

"I feel like at this point, I think all of us are at a point where, at least I am, just kind of it is what it is," Westbrook said. "There's not much that we can do and a lot of the things that have happened are out of our control. So for me especially, I'm not going to get frustrated with things that I can't control and I'm just trying to reiterate that to everyone else."

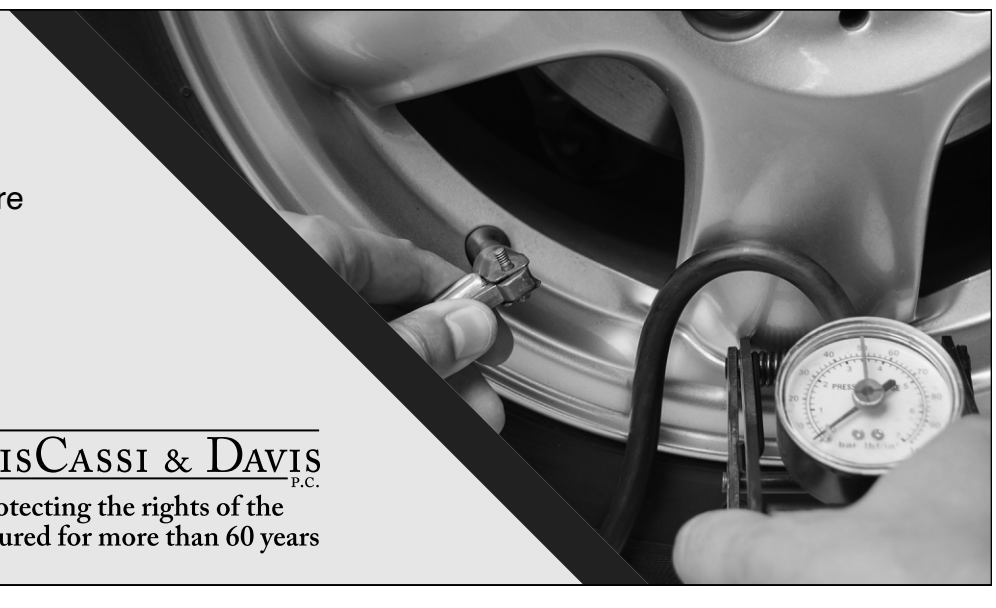
For now, the Huskies want to take things one week, one game, at a time.

"Right now we're hoping that these last couple days we've had of trying to get better, and as we start playing some games, and the games start coming in a rhythm fashion, that we'll be able to kind of develop an identity for this new team that we have now until we get everybody back," Auriemma said.

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Did you know?

When it comes to winter safety driving tips, checking one's tire pressure regularly is perhaps among the best tips.



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NATIONAL SPORTS REPORT

SHORTS

Jackson misses US Olympic team in 500

Erin Jackson slipped in the 500 meters and stunningly finished third, failing to make the Beijing Olympics in her signature event Friday at the U.S. speedskating trials. She had hoped to be given a re-skate, but the rule only allows for re-skates if there is mechanical failure or a fall. Her only chance of getting into the event would be if one of the top two qualifiers give up their spot. "I messed up, it's definitely on me," Jackson said in an interview on USA Network, "but it would be nice to get that re-skate."Jackson, the first Black woman to win a World Cup event when she won in Poland in November, bobbled in the second straightaway of the sprint at the Pettit National Ice Center. Her time of 38.24 seconds put her second going into the final pairing. Jackson would be a gold-medal favorite in Beijing. She's ranked No. 1 in the world in the 500, having won four of eight World Cup races this season. She also had a second and a third. "The rules are you have to fall to get a re-skate," she said. "In the 500 even a stumble is enough to take you out of it. Maybe I should have sat down." Her time wasn't fast enough to hold on. Kimi Goetz knocked out Jackson by taking second in 37.86. Brittany Bowe won in 37.81. Bowe and Goetz already qualified for Beijing by finishing first and second in the 1,000 on Thursday.

2-time US champ Liu out with COVID



Two-time champion Alysa Liu withdrew from the U.S. Figure Skating Championships after testing positive for COVID-19 on Friday, less than a day after a third-place finish in the short program put her in position to make the Olympic team. The 16-year-old Liu is at least the fourth competitor to test positive for the virus in the run-up and during nationals, and the third that was expected to make the team for the Beijing Games. The pairs tandem of Alexa Knierim and Brandon Frazier dropped out the day before the start of competition when he returned a positive test. Just like Knierim and Frazier, who plan to petition for one of the two pairs spots on the Olympic team, Liu has informed U.S. Figure Skating she will petition for one of the three women's spots based on her body of recent work. "I'm fully vaccinated, have been wearing a n95 mask and got 2 negative test results before leaving to Nashville," Liu posted on Instagram. "Things happen unfortunately ..." Most stressing to those still competing is the fact several skaters were in close contact with Liu on Thursday.

Stricker recovering from health scare



Ryder Cup captain Steve Stricker is recovering from a health scare that featured a soaring white blood cell count and inflammation around his heart, which hospitalized him for two weeks and caused him to lose 25 pounds. "I'm lucky," Stricker told Wisconsin.Golf in a lengthy interview. "I'm feeling like things are going in the right direction. I've just got to give it time." Stricker said his heart was jumping in and out of rhythm from Thanksgiving to Christmas Eve. He said the inflammation is starting to abate and he's able to start moving around. The Wisconsin native was cleared to take his family to Florida for the winter at the start of the week. Even so, he said his cardiologist told him it could be six months before he competes again. It was a rough conclusion to what otherwise was the best memory of his career. In a Ryder Cup delayed one year by the pandemic, Stricker led a U.S. team to the biggest rout over Europe, 19-9, at Whistling Straits before a home crowd in Wisconsin. Stricker said for him, it was like winning a major. A month later came a major scare. *—Associated Press*



Alabama coach Nick Saban, left, and the team get off the plane at an airport in Indianapolis on Friday. **CURTIS COMPTON/AP**

CFP CHAMPIONSHIP COMMENTARY

Last peace of the puzzle

Talks on playoff expansion need a mediator to move

By Ralph D. Russo
Associated Press

College football needs a peacemaker.

The administrators responsible for managing the College Football Playoff appear to be at an impasse when it comes to expansion. Nobody is against growing the current field of four, but they now seem to be entrenched in opposing positions regarding how and when.

The CFP's management committee, comprised of 10 conference commissioners and Notre Dame's athletic director, have 10 hours blocked off for meetings Saturday and Sunday in Indianapolis to discuss a new format for deciding a champion.

The 12-team playoff proposal on the table looked like a lock to be approved by now when it was unveiled in June. That would have cleared the way for it to be implemented in 2024.

Instead, provincialism and distrust have short-circuited the work. Nobody in the room appears capable of bridging the divides so collectively the group can do what is best for college football. It should also be noted that nobody has actually been empowered to do that.

"I will be very pleasantly surprised if we make it to the finish line," Big 12 Commissioner Bob Bowlsby told AP about this weekend's meetings.

If they don't, early expansion could be dead and attention instead turn to what comes after the current agreement expires —- when the same sticking points will still exist, but the opportunity to make an additional half-billion in revenue before 2026 will not. Bowlsby was part of the four-person subcommittee that started working on CFP expansion in 2019. If not for the pandemic, expansion would probably have been approved in 2020.

As time passed and conferences changed commissioners, the dynamics of the group changed, too.

New leaders in the Big Ten, Atlantic Coast Conference and Pac-12 were leery of the strategy of going public with the expansion plan before details could be worked out. Then the SEC's plans to add Texas and Oklahoma became public in July and skepticism grew.

"Candidly, given everything that's been said publicly, looks like we are stuck at four for a while," Pac-12 Commissioner George Kliavkoff said Wednesday in a radio interview with 750 The Game in Portland, Oregon.

Big Ten Commissioner Kevin Warren said he wants only Power Five conference champions to receive automatic bids to the playoff.

The Group of Five conferences, and especially American Athletic Conference Commissioner Mike Aresco, are against that 5+1+6 model, and prefer the original proposal's guaranteed spots for the CFP's six highest-ranked champions, regardless of conference.

ACC Commissioner Jim Phillips remains concerned about bypassing eight and expanding to 12, which creates issues with the academic calendar and length of season.

Southeastern Conference Commissioner Greg Sankey has made clear it's 12 or four for the SEC.

"I feel prepared to show up and contribute to a decision, yet I'm not certain if everybody's going to be in that frame of mind," Sankey told SiriusXM's SEC Radio this week.

If the SEC had its way, there would be no automatic bids for league champs and all 12 spots would be at-large.

Notre Dame would prefer 12 over eight, too. A bigger field makes it easier for the Fighting Irish to remain independent.

Kliavkoff and the Pac-12 would like to protect the Rose Bowl, the conference's lucrative longtime partner. But the newest commissioner appears ready to jump on board with any version of expansion after his conference missed out on the CFP for the sixth time in eight years. Kliavkoff has also suggested the Power Five could cut the other five conferences out of the playoff decision-making process when the current 12-year agreement runs out after the 2025 season. Currently, consensus among all 11 CFP signatories is required to change the format but the next deal doesn't have to be so inclusive.

Unsurprisingly, the Big 12's Bowlsby supports the 12-team plan he helped create. But there doesn't appear to be enough trust among the group for a voice from within to broker a compromise. What is needed in these negotiations is someone without territory to protect. A person who has been empowered not to make unilateral decisions but to build consensus among competitors — because that's what these conferences are.

That kind of collaborative leadership has always been hard to come by in major college football, and once again it stands in the way of progress.

NFL PREDICTIONS

Week 18

By Sam Farmer | Los Angeles Times

Last week's record: 11-5. Season: 164-91-1.

Chiefs (11-5) at Broncos (7-9)
Saturday, 4:30 p.m. Line: Chiefs by 10 ½. O/U: 45.
The Chiefs have a slim chance at the No. 1 seed, but enough for incentive. **Chiefs 31, Broncos 17**

Cowboys (11-5) at Eagles (9-7)
Saturday, 8:15 p.m. Line: Cowboys by 4. O/U: 43 ½.
Both are in the playoffs, and from the look of things the Eagles are going to rest their starters. **Cowboys 28, Eagles 13**

Steelers (8-7-1) at Ravens (8-8)
Sunday, 1 p.m. Line: Ravens by 3 ½. O/U: 41.
The Steelers offense leaves a lot to be desired, but Najee Harris is capable of big-time performances. **Ravens 23, Steelers 21**

Titans (11-5) at Texans (4-12)
Sunday, 1 p.m. Line: Titans by 10. O/U: 43.
The Titans aren't going to allow themselves to be swept by a feeble Houston team. Plus, Derrick Henry is coming back for Tennessee. **Titans 31, Texans 17**

Colts (9-7) at Jaguars (2-14)
Sunday, 1 p.m. Line: Colts by 15 ½. O/U: 44.
The Colts have a playoff pulse, and Jacksonville has just two wins, so anything can happen in this weird league. **Colts 27, Jaguars 17**

Bengals (10-6) at Browns (7-9)
Sunday, 1 p.m. Line: Browns by 6. O/U: 38.
Baker Mayfield is out but that might not be a bad thing for the Browns, who should get solid play from Case Keenum. **Browns 24, Bengals 20**

Packers (13-3) at Lions (2-13-1)
Sunday, 1 p.m. Line: Packers by 3 ½. O/U: 44 ½.
No matter who plays, the Packers get the edge. But the Lions should be able to run on them. **Packers 24, Lions 20**

Bears (6-10) at Vikings (7-9)
Sunday, 1 p.m. Line: Vikings by 5 ½. O/U: 43 ½.
Kirk Cousins coming back makes a huge difference for the Vikings. Should be close. **Vikings 27, Bears 23**

Washington (6-10) at Giants (4-12)
Sunday, 1 p.m. Line: Washington by 7. O/U: 38.
Washington isn't very good, but the Giants are terrible. Jake Fromm is starting at quarterback for the Giants. **Washington 28, Giants 16**

Jets (4-12) at Bills (10-6)
Sunday, 4:25 p.m. Line: Bills by 16 ½. O/U: 40 ½.
The Bills should win this going away, considering the incentives in front of them. **Bills 28, Jets 20**

Patriots (10-6) at Dolphins (8-8)
Sunday, 4:25 p.m. Line: Patriots by 6. O/U: 40.
As amazing as Miami's seven-game winning streak was, the Dolphins fell back to earth with a brutal loss to Tennessee. **Patriots 28, Dolphins 23**

Panthers (5-11) at Buccaneers (12-4)
Sunday, 4:25 p.m. Line: Buccaneers by 8. O/U: 41 ½.
Tom Brady and the Buccaneers continue to roll and find new guys to step up. **Buccaneers 35, Panthers 16**

Saints (8-8) at Falcons (7-9)
Sunday, 4:25 p.m. Line: Saints by 3 ½. O/U: 39 ½.
The Saints don't have much on offense, but their front seven is tough. Hard to run on them, and when their corners are healthy, that defense can clamp down. That's the difference. Prediction: **Saints 23, Falcons 20**

Seahawks (6-10) at Cardinals (11-5)
Sunday, 4:25 p.m. Line: Cardinals by 6 ½. O/U: 48.
Seattle might be able to run a bit, but its defense is absolutely porous. **Cardinals 28, Seahawks 20**

49ers (9-7) at Rams (12-4)
Sunday, 4:25 p.m. Line: Rams by 4. O/U: 44 ½.
The Rams have lost five in a row to San Francisco. Both teams are incentivized. Rams can take advantage of vulnerable 49ers corners and win their sixth straight to clinch the NFC West. **Rams 27, 49ers 24**

Chargers (9-7) at Raiders (9-7)
Sunday, 8:20 p.m. Line: Chargers by 3. O/U: 49 ½.
Winner gets into the playoffs. When that Raiders front four is rushing the passer the way it can, it's hitting home. Derek Carr has been making plays. **Raiders 27, Chargers 24**

MOTORING



The Lucid EVs have the following projected ranges: Air Pure, 406 miles; Air Touring, 406 miles; Air Grand Touring, 517 miles; Air Dream Edition, 503 miles. **LUCID MOTORS PHOTOS**

A breath of fresh Air

Taking a look at Tesla's archrival Lucid and how it measures up

By Henry Payne
The Detroit News

Located just 11 miles up the San Francisco Bay from Tesla Inc.'s Fremont factory, Lucid Motors is the third electric vehicle maker in California's Big Three.

With a market capitalization hovering near $100 billion — more than Detroit's Big Three of General Motors Co., Ford Motor Co. and Stellantis NV — the brand joins Tesla and Irvine-based Rivian Automotive Inc. as highly-valued, 21st-century automakers delivering a new breed of luxury performance.

With ex-Tesla chief engineer Peter Rawlinson at the helm, the Bay Area startup wants to beat Tesla at its own game. With a stunning, 1,111-horsepower sedan as its flagship, Lucid is coming to a studio showroom near you.

Boasting the industry's longest range and most-efficient electric motors, it aims to be an American icon. Significantly, Lucid does not offer Tesla's secret sauce: A proprietary charging network. Instead, it boasts technology-partner Atieva, which produces the battery packs for the international Formula E electric racing series that is pushing the boundaries of battery performance.

Lucid is headquartered in an unassuming office park here, its sans-serif logo glowing atop a low, glass building. Inside, the lobby is dominated by the Lucid Air's 900-volt, skateboard architecture — its batteries slung low between the four wheels. As the first, $169,000 Air Dream Edition models come down the line at the company's Casa Grande, Arizona, assembly plant, the company dreams of 500,000-a-year production volumes by 2030 — including production of the Gravity SUV in 2023.

But first it needs to sell the Air, one of the most stunning cars on the market, whether gas-or-electric powered. After wowing the 2017 New York Auto Show, the Air prototype has been methodically prepared for production while Rawlinson & Co. raised capital, a production facility, and performance expectations.

Designed by ex-Mazda design chief Derek Jenkins, Air uses the skateboard chassis to full advantage. Without a gas engine up front, the sleek sedan sits on a wheelbase for a mid-size BMW 5-series — but with interior room similar to a full-size BMW 7-series, including a rear seat fit for 7-footers.

The sci-fi nose features a thin chrome brow stretching the width of the fascia — an even thinner line of LED headlight underneath it. Clam shell hoods reveal big cargo spaces for rear and front trunks. The car wouldn't be out of place in a Tron movie.

The cabin is dominated by twin console and instrument screens, the latter 34-inches. A panoramic glass roof spans the cabin.

The years after he helped bring the Model S to market, engineer Rawlinson hopes the Air will be the EV standard for the next decade.

Rawlinson took the helm of battery-maker Atieva in 2014 with the promise of building an EV brand. In addition to Jenkins, the Welsh-born engineer has attracted top industry talent to Lucid including ex-Tesla Model 3 and Audi manufacturing veteran Peter Hochholdinger and ex-Apple and Rivian software engineer Michael Bell.



The Lucid Air is an ultra-luxury ride with advanced battery technology.

In the back of Lucid's HQ, doors open to a big development bay where workers fuss over Air models in various states of undress. Atieva's Formula E manufacturing is also done under the building's roof, a reminder of the importance of race track-to-production technology transfer that has been key to gasoline engine development over the past two centuries.

"There is a lot of talk of racing technology transfer in the industry, but this is the real deal," said Justin Berkowitz, Lucid Public Relations Manager for Technology who came over from BMW. Rawlinson himself was Lotus chief engineer before his stint at Tesla.

Beginning in 2018, Ateiva has been the sole manufacturer of batteries for Formula E — its high-performance cells riding in Jaguar, Audi, Porsche, and other racers. Similar battery cell tech sits in the belly of the Air, achieving an industry first 500 miles plus of range.

The batteries drive Rawlinson's prized, electric drive unit. With a power density of 9.05/kilogram at 20,000 RPM, the small, 163-pound drive unit efficiently integrates the electric motor and differential into one housing.

The result is not only more power — the Air Dream Edition's horsepower rivals that of the $3.8 million Aston Martin Valkyrie hybrid supercar — but space efficiency that allows class-leading front trunk space.

Lucid is ambitious. After the Air Dream's launch — Grand Touring and base Pure models will follow — Lucid's Gravity SUV will go toe-to-toe with the gull-winged Tesla Model X. Lucid plans to expand into Canada, Europe in 2022, and China in 2023.

The Air's beauty, performance, and startup appeal earned it a nomination for North American Car of the Year.

"It's an effortless vehicle. Interior is a knockout. The performance is extraordinary," said NACTOY juror Lindsay Brooke, publications editor for the Society of Automotive Engineers. "And for being such a big machine it really handles better than I thought it would. If they can build up this brand it will be a powerhouse in electric vehicles."

It has gained the reputation as the "next Tesla" here in Silicon Valley, but some analysts are wary.

Intriguingly the Air Dream Edition begins customer deliveries at about the same time as Tesla's own 1,000-horsepower beast, the Model S Plaid, which hits the market at $134,490. The Lucid boasts 124 miles range more than the Tesla while still providing shocking power. The Plaid hits 60 mph in 2 seconds, the Air in 2.5. Game on.



Touring trims are typically more loaded with features than entry-level LX trims. **AMERICAN HONDA MOTOR CO.**

Understanding new car trim levels and different options

By Ronald Montoya
Edmunds

A key part of the car buying process is familiarizing yourself with some of the key terms you'll encounter on automaker websites or on the dealership lot. You want to ensure that you're getting the right features in your new vehicle. Here are the basics about trim levels, styles, options, packages and accessories.

Make and model: "Makes" are the companies that make the cars: Kia, Ford or Subaru, for example. "Models" are the cars the automaker sells: Telluride, Explorer or Crosstrek.

Trim levels and body styles: Trim levels further identify a vehicle by a particular set of special features. Higher trim levels either add to the features of the entry-level model (often called the "base" model) or replace them with something else. Trim levels are where you'll come across terms such as SE, Limited, Sport and Grand Touring, among countless others. You might also encounter the word "style."

Some people use style and trim level interchangeably, but in general, a "style" usually indicates whether the vehicle is a sedan, pickup truck or SUV, and also what type of engine and drive system comes standard.

Options: Options are features that don't come as standard equipment with the vehicle. These items can range from a sunroof to a better sound system to a larger engine.

Packages: Packages are groups of options that have been bundled together with a common theme. For example, a technology package might include such options as a larger touchscreen, navigation, upgraded headlights and adaptive cruise control. A cold weather package might have heated seats, headlight washers and all-weather floor mats.

Dealer-installed accessories: Accessories are parts that dealerships sell and install. These items can be anything ranging from a cargo net to larger wheels to performance parts. Some are made by the manufacturer; others are products sold by the dealership. Items sold by the dealership are often things such as tinted windows, fabric protection or an antitheft device.



Few trails are too rough for the 2021 Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 4xe. **STELLANTIS/TNS**

REVIEW

Jeep Wrangler goes green

By Barry Spyker
Tribune News Service

The iconic Jeep Wrangler, the go-anywhere 4x4 that was born in 1941 as a U.S. military vehicle, has enlisted into today's growing army of hybrids.

Amazingly, there's a Wrangler that can be plugged in, yet climb rocks and crawl down lumpy dirt trails and do it as quietly as the nature surrounding it.

The 2021 Wrangler Rubicon 4xe (that's 4-by-e) is the first plug-in hybrid Wrangler and it's likely to raise some eyebrows. First, is this thing really Jeep-rugged? And, second, is the 4xe a worthy hybrid?

First, yes, this is a serious off-roader. It has plenty of power with a combined output of 375 horsepower and 470 pound-feet of torque. Few trails are too rough for its multiple 4x4 systems, 11 inches of ground clearance, steel bumpers, skid plates and locking front and rear differentials. It can even wade through 30 inches of water, Jeep says.

In answer to question No. 2, it gets 49 mpg-e ("e" for equivalent) on electric, but just 20 mpg when operating on gas only. So you'll need to plug in every night for optimum mileage, and it's a mere 21 miles of electric-only range.

On the plus side, the 4xe is not restricted to electric so it has a total driving range of 370 miles.

2021 Jeep Wrangler Unlimited Rubicon 4xe

Base Price: $51,695
As tested: $61,690
(Includes leather seats, $1,695; Cold Weather group, $595; Trailer two package, $795; Safety and Advanced Safety groups, $1,690; steel bumpers, $1,745; remote key, $645; premium Sunrider soft top, $595)
Powertrain: Turbocharged 2.0-liter inline 4-cylinder engine mated to two electric motors and an 8-speed automatic transmission
Fuel economy: 49 mpg-e on electric; 20 mpg combined on gas only

It also is the quickest of the Wranglers, hitting 60 mph in just 6 seconds. Under the hood: a turbocharged 2.0-liter 4-cylinder engine good for 270 hp. It's matched with two electric motors; The combined power is routed through an 8-speed automatic transmission. On the road, the 4xe feels like any other Wrangler, for better or worse. The 4xe can tow up to 3,500 pounds with a tow/electric package.

The e-Save button allows it to run on gas-only until you get to the trail, then run quietly on electric. It won't last long on 4WD and in off-road conditions, but it may be enough for short commutes. Expect weaker performance with only 134 hp to move the 5,300-pound beast. Charging the 17-kWh lithium ion battery pack takes about 12 hours with the standard 120v charger. Wrangler is roomy inside and has great visibility. Audio and climate controls are water-resistant. All-weather floor mats are ready for mess, too, so the cabin can be hosed down.

The four-door Unlimited seats five. Front seats are comfortable, supportive and trimmed in leather.

The instrument panel has two analog dials for the speedo and tach that flank a digital information display. An 8.4-inch infotainment screen houses Jeep's Uconnect system.

Navigation can find the trails and a forward-facing camera peers ahead for the obstacles. Cargo space is more than ample with the Unlimited Wranglers: 31.7 cubic feet behind the rear seats and 72.4 cubes with the rear seats folded down.

The 4xe has all the safety features of other four-door Wranglers but advanced driver-assist features are optional and part of two safety groups.

The 4xe comes in three trims: the Rubicon around $60K, the Sahara around $51K and the High Altitude around $57K.

Missing key for locked tires



Bob Weber
Motormouth



DREAMSTIME

Q: I went to Costco to get snow tires. While I was waiting, I was told they could not remove my wheels because the key for the locking lug nuts was missing. I went to the Honda dealer who had rotated my tires four weeks ago for advice. I was told these are not genuine Honda locks and they could not make a new key. The car still has the original tires and wheels and I have never changed out the locks. I didn't even know I had locks. I am now driving around with new snow tires in my car and can't use them. What would you do? - C.K., Lake in the Hills, Illinois

A: Most wheel locks will keep honest people from stealing your fancy rims. But there are options for removing them. (Thieves already know.) Mechanics know that many auto parts stores sell special sockets that will bite onto the outside of the lug nuts but will damage their appearance at the very least, and probably destroy them. Be prepared to buy new lug nuts — locking or not. It is a small price to pay to get those winter tires installed. It is impossible to obtain the right replacement key.

Q: I just purchased all-season touring tires for my vehicle. Some reports suggest touring tires may not be non-touring all-season tires on slushy or snowy streets. What gives? How can touring tires be considered all season if they don't fare well on slushy or snowy streets?— K.S., Chicago

A: Touring tires, whether for summer use, all-season use or winter use, are constructed to provide a comfortable ride. Incidentally, experts agree that all-season tires are good for climates that have light or occasional snow. For the snow belt they advise winter tires.

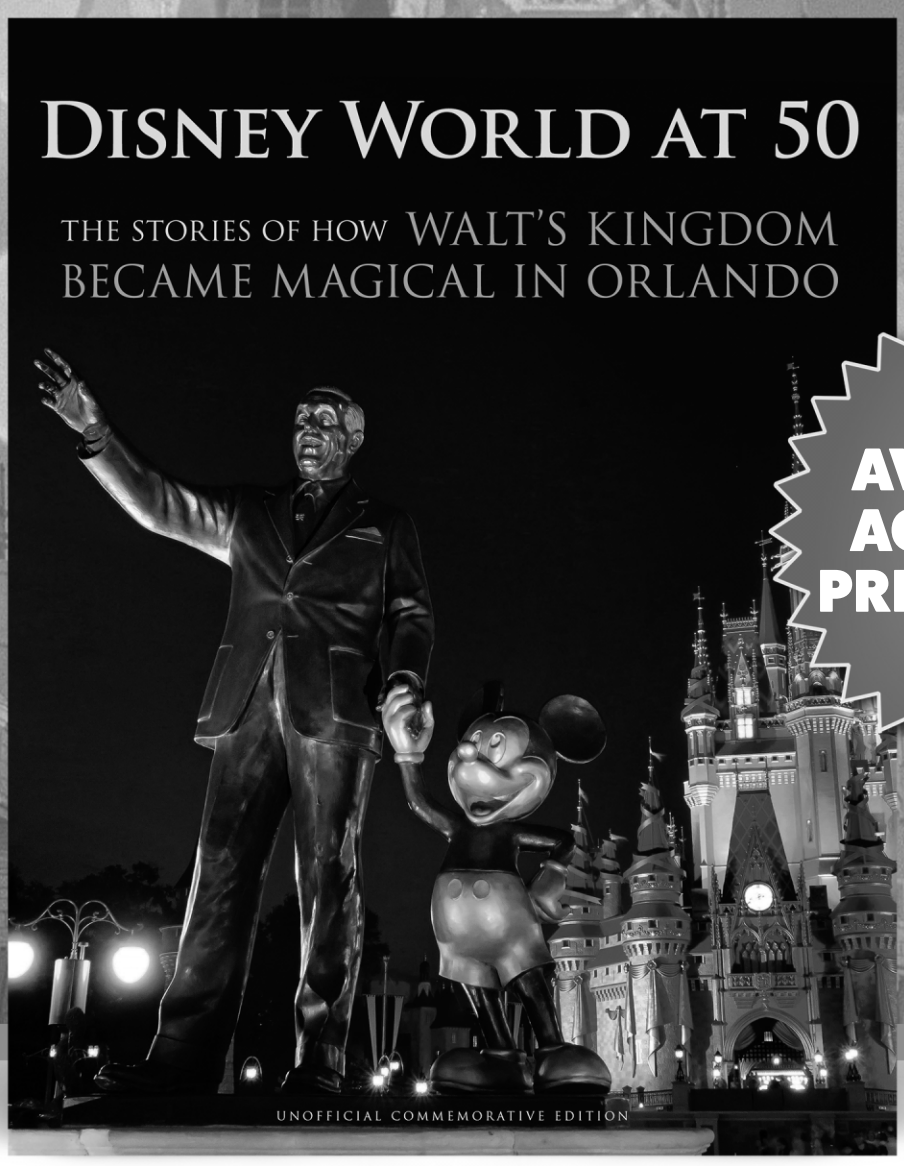
Q: I own a 2008 Toyota Solara SLE convertible with 26,000 miles of gentle use. Recently, I needed to adjust tire pressure due to temp changes by only 2 psi. After a 10-mile trip, the TPMS light came on blinking then steady indicating a malfunction. I checked pressure the next morning and it checked out OK at 32psi in each tire. Yesterday after a few errands the light came on again while I was pulling into my garage. All four tires have just over 10,000 miles. I realize the sensors have a limited life span. I just did not know if it could be something else and would appreciate your input. — R.P., Las Vegas

A: Your guess about the life span of the sensors as the problem is probably good. The sensors are battery powered and those batteries may be getting weak. You may have to replace the sensors since there's no way to simply replace the batteries.

Q: Regarding a 2015 Chevy Impala with the 3.6-liter, V-6 engine, the owner's manual says to change the transmission fluid as indicated in the maintenance schedule. The maintenance schedule for normal driving does not mention changing the transmission fluid. The maintenance schedule for severe driving states that the automatic transmission fluid should be changed every 45,000 miles. Does the transmission fluid need to be changed for normal driving? If so, is the fluid exchange process offered by the dealer service department appropriate? — B.M., Lisle, Illinois

A: Unless you pull a cabin cruiser, you needn't change the ATF. But if you choose to do it, the fluid exchange process is the way to go. Dropping the pan sometimes leads to trouble.

Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. He maintains this status by seeking certification every five years. Weber's work appears in professional trade magazines and other consumer publications. His writing also appears in automotive trade publications, Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. Send questions along with name and town to motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.



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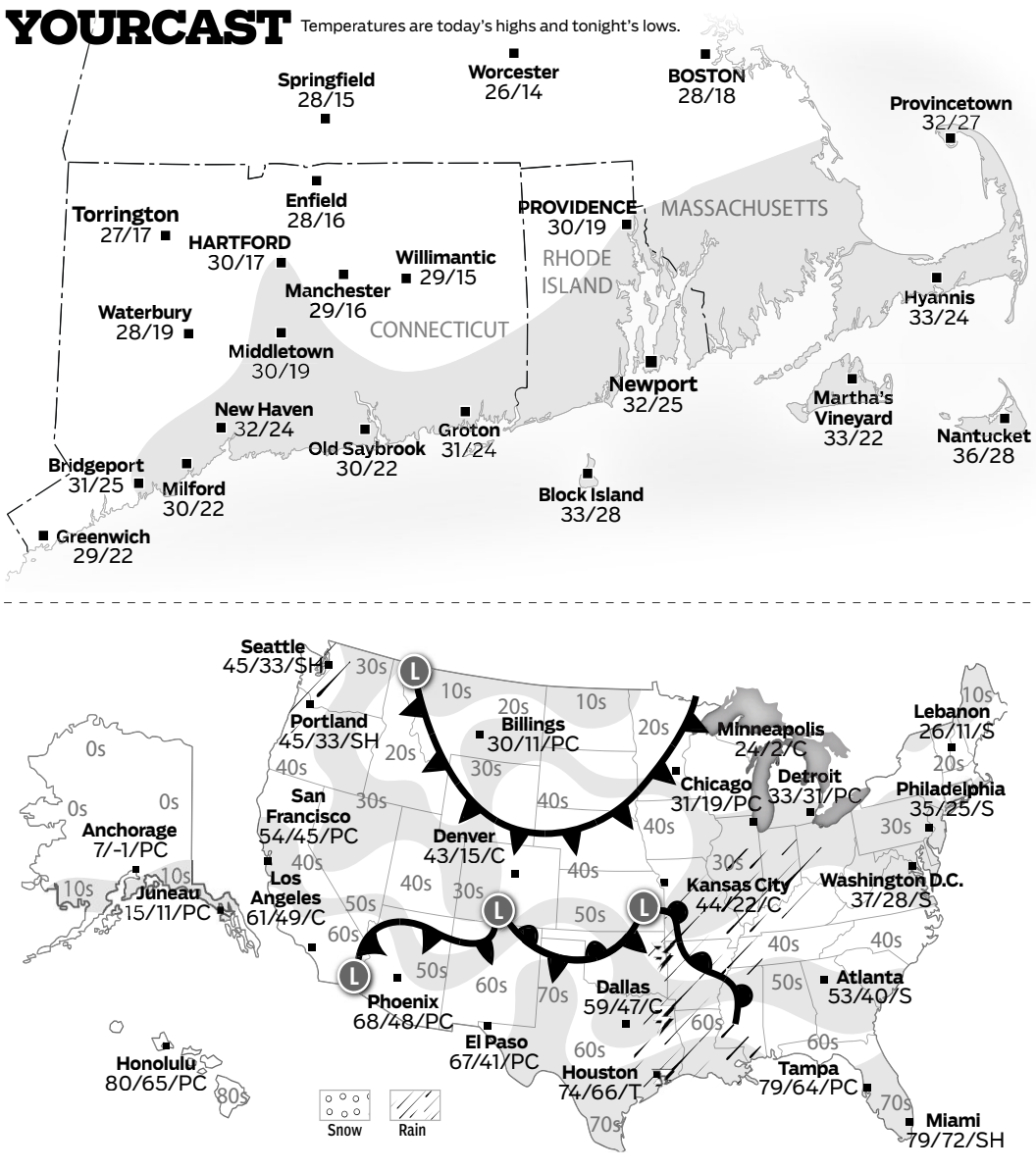
WEATHER

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
SUNRISE NOON SUNSET	SUNRISE NOON SUNSET	SUNRISE NOON SUNSET	SUNRISE NOON SUNSET	SUNRISE NOON SUNSET
Sunny and very chilly. Northwest wind at 5 to 10 mph.	Thickening cloudiness, afternoon showers, may briefly start as snow, sleet or freezing rain.	Partly sunny and breezy, colder.	Sunny, breezy and very cold.	Mixed clouds and sunshine, not as cold.
HIGH 30° LOW 17°	HIGH 38° LOW 24°	HIGH 31° LOW 9°	HIGH 13° LOW 1°	HIGH 25° LOW 20°

CONNECTICUT WEATHER
For the latest weather news throughout your day.
courant.com/weather

YOURCAST

Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.



OUTLOOK

A snowstorm on Friday overachieved its expectations as bands of 2 to 3 inch per hour accumulations setup in central and eastern portions of Connecticut. Some snow to rain ratios were close to 20 to 1 or twice the normal of 10 to 1. Accumulations across the state included: 14.0 inches in Hampton, 13.3 inches in Danielson, 13 inches in Pomfret, 12.7 in East Killingly, 12.5 inches in Dayville, 12.0 inches in Waterbury, 11.9 inches in Willington, and 11.1 inches in Coventry. The northwest hills which typically receive the highest totals were spared with 2 to 5 inches accumulation.

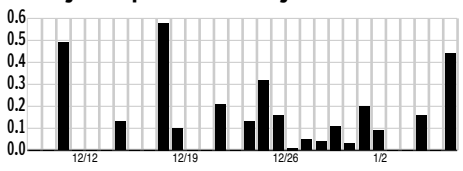
-Gary Lessor

ALMANAC

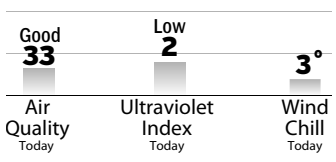
Precipitation In Inches	Total	Normal
Yesterday (by 7 p.m.)	0.44	0.11
Month to date	0.89	0.80
Total this year	0.89	0.80
Snowfall In Inches		
Yesterday (by 4 p.m.)	5.4	0.5
Total this year	9.6	15.2

Precipitation, temperature at Windsor Locks

30-day Precipitation History In Inches



Air Quality Forecast For Today



	Today	Tomorrow
Sunrise	7:18 a.m.	7:18 a.m.
Sunset	4:37 p.m.	4:38 p.m.
Moonrise	11:13 a.m.	11:35 a.m.
Moonset	11:33 p.m.	a.m.

Moon Phase

First	Full	Last	New
Jan 9	Jan 17	Jan 25	Feb 1

Tides	High	Low	Temp.
N.L. State Pier	1:35 a.m. 1:51 p.m.	8:09 a.m. 8:31 p.m.	43°
Saybrook Jetty	2:46 a.m. 3:02 p.m.	9:02 a.m. 9:24 p.m.	42°
Connecticut River at Portland	5:29 a.m. 5:45 p.m.	12:17 a.m. 12:48 p.m.	
Madison	3:02 a.m. 3:23 p.m.	9:13 a.m. 9:36 p.m.	42°
New Haven	3:22 a.m. 3:43 p.m.	9:37 a.m. 10:00 p.m.	41°
Stamford	3:26 a.m. 3:47 p.m.	9:51 a.m. 10:14 p.m.	44°

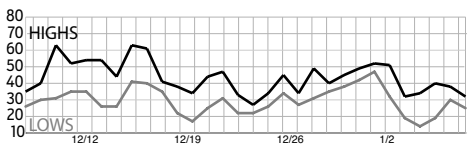
River Stage at Hartford: 4.66 feet at 6:30 p.m.

Boating Weather	L.I. Sound W	L.I. Sound E	B. I. Sound
	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny
Wind	NW, 5-15	NW, 10-15	NW, 10-20
Seas	1-3 ft.	2-3 ft.	2-4 ft.

Temperature	High	Low
Friday	32 at 2:46 p.m	25 at 6:51 p.m
Normal for date	36	20
Record for date	62 in 1907	-9 in 2018
A year ago	41	28
Range this year	52	14

Heating Degree Days	Season	Normal	Last Season
For July 1 - Jan 7	2027	2427	2175

30-day Temperature History



Atmosphere	High	Low
Barometer	29.93 at 12 a.m.	29.72 at 12 p.m.
Dew point	24° at 6 a.m.	12° at 7 p.m.

AROUND THE WORLD

Today's forecast in cities not included in the maps above:

NEW ENGLAND				Baltimore	38	20	S	Nashville	48	45	PC	San Juan	83	74	SH	Budapest	34	22	C
Bangor	25	12	S	Bismarck	18	-9	C	New Orleans	67	65	C	Tucson	70	46	PC	Buenos Aires	84	72	PC
Burlington	20	18	S	Boise	35	14	PC	New York	33	28	S	**WORLD**				Cairo	71	53	S
Caribou	14	8	S	Buffalo	32	31	PC	Okla. City	58	34	C					Cancun	83	74	PC
Concord	25	10	S	Charleston	54	44	S	Omaha	41	13	PC	Amsterdam	43	37	R	Dubai	75	64	S
Montpelier	19	11	S	Cincinnati	41	39	PC	Orlando	77	61	PC	Athens	59	45	SH	Dublin	43	37	C
Mt. Wash.	9	5	S	Cleveland	38	33	PC	Pittsburgh	36	34	PC	Bangkok	93	75	S	Edinburgh	45	36	R
Portland	26	14	S	Indianapolis	37	34	PC	Raleigh	45	29	S	Barbados	84	72	S	Helsinki	27	10	C
Woods Hole	31	24	S	Jacksonville	67	53	PC	St. Louis	45	30	C	Beijing	48	23	C	Hong Kong	70	63	PC
NATION				Las Vegas	62	43	PC	Salt Lake City	41	22	PC	Beirut	71	59	PC	Istanbul	54	45	R
Albany	25	19	S	Miami Beach	78	73	SH	San Antonio	66	54	C	Berlin	37	30	C	Jerusalem	61	50	S
Albuquerque	56	30	PC	Milwaukee	31	15	PC	San Diego	61	53	C	Bermuda	68	57	PC	Johannesburg	75	59	T
Atlantic City	34	23	S																

Kingston	90	75	PC	Stockholm	32	24	SF
Lisbon	59	46	PC	Sydney	81	70	SH
London	50	37	R	Tel Aviv	68	52	S
Madrid	50	41	PC	Tokyo	45	30	PC
Mexico City	72	49	S	Toronto	32	25	SF
Milan	43	27	SH	Vancouver	37	36	R
Montreal	10	9	S	Warsaw	32	27	S
Moscow	23	16	SN				
Nassau	82	66	PC				
New Delhi	64	52	T				
Paris	50	39	R				
Prague	36	28	SF				
Rio de Janeiro	82	70	T				
Rome	48	30	C				
Seoul	41	25	C				
Singapore	93	75	T				

KEY: **S** Sunny, **C** Cloudy, **PC** Partly Cloudy, **R** Rain, **SH** Showers, **SN** Snow, **SF** Snow Flurries, **T** T-storms

Weather page produced by WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY Weather Center

LOCAL SCOREBOARD

THURSDAY'S LATE HIGH SCHOOL RESULTS

BOYS BASKETBALL

CCC-Inter
SIMSBURY 45, BRISTOL EASTERN 36
SIMSBURY (4-0): Anthony Simpson 1-0-2, Aidan Riordan 7-0-14, Keenan Willison 1-0-2, Chris Kokines 6-4-17, Alex Pepper 2-0-6, Nate Beizer 1-2-4. Totals 18-6-45.
BRISTOL EASTERN (1-5):Nasir Walker-Jenkins 5-0-10, Elijah Borgelin 3-0-9, Lukas Sward 1-0-2, Ben D'Amato 2-0-6, Nate Fries 0-1-1, Isaiah Lawrence-Bynum 4-0-8. Totals 15-1-36.

S	**7**	**10**	**8**	**20**	**— 45**
BE	**10**	**7**	**13**	**6**	**— 36**

Note: Down 5after 3quarters, Simsbury outscored Bristol 17-2in the first 6minutes of the 4th to pull ahead for good.
PLAINVILLE 65, ROCKY HILL 41
ROCKY HILL (0-6): Casey Robinson 3-2-8, Shiv Ghutadaria 1-0-2, Jake Polites 4-2-10, Danny Lin 0-1-1, Luke Castanho 2-0-6, Jaden Veal 1-0-2, Yazdan Aftab 2-0-4, Jayden Osei-Tutu 2-4-8. Totals 15-9-41.
PLAINVILLE (2-5): Brady Wieczorek 2-0-5, Brennan Staubley 3-1-9, Dylan Brewer 6-2-14, Cam Lamothe 6-2-14, Joe Vasques 10-2-23. Totals 27-7-65.
Note: Vasques had 8assists, 7rebounds.
NORTHWEST CATHOLIC 81, WINDSOR 80
NORTHWEST CATHOLIC (5-1): Matthew Curtis 12-5-32, Jehyvic Spencer 2-0-4, London Jemison 4-1-9, Gianni Mirabello 7-2-22, Badara Diakite 3-1-8, Hayden Abdullah 2-1-6. Totals 30-10-81.
WINDSOR (4-1): Quintin Floyd 5-4-15, Raymond Rodriguez 6-0-13, Rashawn Tibby 3-2-9, Tyler Betsey 7-7-26, Anthony Williams 2-0-6, Prince Samuels 1-1-3, John Pierce 2-4-8. Totals 26-18-80.
NCCC
HMTCA 56, EAST WINDSOR 54 (OT)
EAST WINDSOR (0-1): Josh Maddox 4-3-11, Ryan Lee 4-0-8, Juelz Torres 2-0-4, Alex Giannuzzi 4-0-8, Eric Wyse 4-0-9, Nick Parakilas 4-2-14. Totals 22-5-54.
HMTCA (2-2): Seth Moore 2-0-6, Christian Smith 9-1-19, Derrick Sheets 8-0-21, Hector Couvertier 1-2-5, Marcus Calderon 1-0-3, Russell Smith 1-0-2. Totals 22-3-56.

EW	**9**	**21**	**10**	**9**	**5 —**	**54**
H	**10**	**14**	**12**	**13**	**7 —**	**56**

CTC
WINDHAM TECH 97, ELLIS TECH 40
ELLIS TECH (0-5): Caleb Evans 2-0-4, Everett Leblanc 2-0-4, Ian Brais 1-0-3, Tyler Parmentor 1-0-2, Kellen Smith 6-0-12, Devin Cornell 2-0-5, Garrett Larson 0-2-2, Christian Estrada 2-1-6, Owen Lefebvre 1-0-2. Totals 17-3-40.
WINDHAM TECH (6-1): Dezmen Gaston 7-0-17, Daniel Toce 4-0-8, Alex Johnston 5-2-16, Trey Lindsey 1-3-5, Brody Belanger 9-0-21, Danny Meikle 5-0-10, Joey Johnson 9-2-20. Totals 40-7-97.

ET	**11**	**13**	**4**	**12**	**— 40**	
WT	**36**	**20**	**28**	**13**	**— 97**	

Note: Meikle had a double-double with 10rebounds and Toce had 10assists, 6 steals.
SCC
XAVIER 61, SHEEHAN 43
SHEEHAN (2-2): Isaiah Hernandez 2-0-4, Jaidin Kapoor 1-2-4, Anthony MarkAnthony 3-2-10, Alex Morales 4-0-9, Ryan Gersz 2-0-4, Vin Carbone 2-1-5, Ethan Pabon 3-0-7. Totals 17-5-43.
XAVIER (3-3): John Carrozzella 2-3-7, Ethan Bessoni 2-0-6, Colby Ciampi 2-2-6, Vik Vakati 1-1-4, Anthony Parker 7-5-20, Richie Rivers 5-2-12, Aidan Driscoll 2-2-6. Totals 21-15-61.

S	**7**	**11**	**6**	**19**	**— 43**	
X	**16**	**22**	**7**	**16**	**— 61**	

Others
SMSA 65, INNOVATION 31
SMSA (5-0): King Shaw 5-1-11, Miguel Varela 1-1-3, Abijah Miller 6-1-13, Kemani Thompson 13-2-30, Zahkeer Kerr 1-0-2, Nizayiah Bogar 1-2-4, Dashawn Thomas 1-0-2. Totals 28-7-65.
INNOVATION (0-3): Tyvonn Thompson 2-0-4, Wendell Mckenney 1-0-3, Amir Bolden 2-0-4, Angel Maldonado 1-1-3, Jayden Newell-Kemp 5-2-12, Kanai Parkman 1-0-2, Lebron White 1-0-3. Totals 11-3-31.

S	**18**	**15**	**21**	**11**	**— 65**	
I	**4**	**7**	**7**	**13**	**— 31**	

GIRLS BASKETBALL

CCC-East
E.O. SMITH 55, EAST CATHOLIC 35
E.O. SMITH (6-2): Jill Dingler 1-0-2, Olivia Verboven 3-0-8, Madeline Greene 1-0-2, Kate McAvoy 2-0-5, Riley DeForest 1-0-2, Jenna Boardman 0-2-2, Claire Greene 4-0-10, Lilli Clark 3-1-7, Maddie Hughes 7-1-17. Totals 22-4-55.
EAST CATHOLIC (0-5): Kailani Galan 3-1-9, Kayliana Salazar 3-0-8, Alexis Jablonecki 3-2-8, Zoe Latina 3-0-7, Gabby Thompson 1-1-3. Totals 13-4-35.

EOS	**12**	**10**	**14**	**19**	**— 55**	
EC	**1**	**12**	**12**	**10**	**— 35**	

SOUTH WINDSOR 49, TOLLAND 38
TOLLAND (2-2): Annelise Martens 5-6-17, Cadyn Grassi 1-0-3, Kelis Hurst 1-0-2, Kelly LeBel 5-1-14, Sophia Leach 1-0-2. Totals 13-7-38.
SOUTH WINDSOR (2-5): Anna Matus 5-5-18, Lexie Wheeler 3-3-10, Kaitlyn Bullock 1-0-2, Olivia Petgrave 4-2-10, Reagan Heafey-DeAngelis 2-1-6, Katie Dunn 0-3-3. Totals 15-14-49.

T	**16**	**8**	**7**	**7**	**— 38**	
SW	**11**	**14**	**14**	**10**	**— 49**	

CCC-Inter
SIMSBURY 59, MANCHESTER 47
MANCHESTER (1-5): Sanai Worrell 4-3-12, Madison Boilard 2-0-5, Saron Hesford 2-1-6, Tiara Tyson 8-3-14, Elise Ryan 2-0-6, Alayshia Bell 2-0-4. Totals 20-7-47.
SIMSBURY (6-1): Lauren Sabia 8-1-18, Moira Hughes 0-1-1, Katie Perlitz 2-2-6, Olivia Jarvis 3-1-7, Alex Peterson 0-0-0, Faye Kaplinski 6-0-12, Amanda Gallagher 4-3-13, Amelia Rogers 1-0-2. Totals 24-8-59.

M	**6**	**8**	**9**	**24**	**— 47**	
S	**14**	**19**	**10**	**16**	**— 59**	

Note: Jarvis and Kaplisnki each had 10 rebounds.
NEWINGTON 47, GLASTONBURY 23
NEWINGTON (7-0): Lily Ferguson 5-3-14, Karissa Zocco 1-1-4, Adriana Romano 1-0-2, Marlie Zocco 1-0-3, Arianna Barnes 1-1-3, Selah Prignano 1-0-2, Bela Cucuta 4-0-10, Brianna Gadarowski 1-0-3, Kendall Miller 3-0-6. Totals 18-5-47.
GLASTONBURY (3-2): Kiley Feeney 2-1-6, Gisel Astiasaran 2-5-9, Skylar Fiske 1-0-2, Madison Handrahan 2-0-4, Alyssa Healy 1-0-2. Totals 8-6-23.

N	**13**	**18**	**11**	**5**	**— 47**	
G	**6**	**3**	**4**	**10**	**— 23**	

Note: Miller had 7rebounds, 3assists, 3steals.
RHAM 45, FARMINGTON 43
FARMINGTON (4-2): Daria Fournier 6-2-21, Mackenzie Campbell 2-0-4, Abby Finn 1-0-2, Reghina Palanviel 2-0-4, Sarah Bertolette 3-2-8, Anna Loughman 2-0-4. Totals 16-4-43.
RHAM (7-0): Maddy Evans 2-4-10, Ailish Kleinhen 3-0-8, Maddie Graves 4-0-11, Kathy Chapman 6-2-14, Addison Brown 1-0-2. Totals 16-6-45.

F	**11**	**6**	**11**	**15**	**— 43**	
R	**3**	**13**	**12**	**17**	**— 45**	

WETHERSFIELD 53, CONARD 50 (OT)
WETHERSFIELD (2-1): Maia Berdebes 3-1-8, Sophie Adams 1-0-2, Vanessa Venditti 7-3-23, Bella Tomaino 3-0-7, Alison Wagner 2-0-4, Ella Alger 4-0-9. Totals 20-4-53.
CONARD (1-4): Callie Cosgrove 10-1-25, Leah Williams 2-0-5, Tatiana Harrison 1-0-2, Sophia Lynch 4-0-9, Courtney McPhee 3-0-9. Totals 20-1-50.

W	**12**	**20**	**13**	**1**	**7 —**	**53**	
C	**10**	**14**	**15**	**7**	**4 —**	**50**	

PLATT 35, ROCKY HILL 29
ROCKY HILL (4-2): Alyssa Gau 2-2-6, Kate Oostendorp 2-1-7, Angelina Daley 0-1-1, Christina DeNovellis 4-2-10, Christina Garcia 2-1-5. Totals 10-7-29.
PLATT (6-3): Vianna Alcantara 2-6-11, Kaylani Cruz 0-0-0, Brooke Bell 1-0-2, Khrystina Campbell 7-4-18, Antwanette Tann 1-2-4. Totals 11-12-35.

RH	**8**	**9**	**8**	**4**	**—**	**29**
P	**8**	**2**	**11**	**14**	**—**	**35**

NCCC
EAST WINDSOR 49, HMTCA 10
EAST WINDSOR (3-2): Sammi Ruggiero 0-1-1, Ally Ragaglia 1-0-2, Kristina Keyes 1-0-2, Bailey Winner 9-2-20, Alex Witzke 3-0-6, Katie Blume 9-0-18. Totals 23-3-49.
HMTCA (1-4): Nyasia Pitts 1-0-3, Jazlyn Vega 2-0-4, Elle DiChristina 0-3-3, Destini Jones 0-0-0, Annika Jones 0-0-0, Deysha Rivera 0-0-0. Totals 3-3-10.

EW	**10**	**18**	**15**	**6**	**— 49**	
H	**4**	**0**	**0**	**6**	**— 10**	

BOYS HOCKEY

CCC-Inter
WETHERSFIELD 2, NORTHWEST CATHOLIC 2 (OT)
NWC; 1; 0; 1; 0; —; 2
W; 0; 0; 2; 0; —; 2
Goals: W—Jack Millen, Ryan Mazur; **NWC—**Bobby Lachance, JJ Hurley.
Saves: W—Matt Ruck, 30; **NWC—**Hunter Willcox, 28. Rec.: **W—**3-2-1; **NWC—**4-1-2.

WRESTLING

CCC-Inter
BRISTOL EASTERN 52, ENFIELD 17
Others
MIDDLETOWN 48, NONNEWAUG 24
POMPERAUG 39, MIDDLETOWN 27

BOYS SWIMMING

Others
GLASTONBURY 100.5, HAMDEN 80.5
Note: James Liao (200IM/500free) and Campbell McFall (50/100free) were double winners for Glastonbury.

FRIDAY'S HIGH SCHOOL RESULTS

BOYS BASKETBALL

CCC-Inter
SOUTHINGTON AT ENFIELD, PPD. TO TODAY
BULKELEY AT E.O. SMITH, PPD. TO TODAY
BRISTOL CENTRAL AT EAST HARTFORD, PPD. TO WEDNESDAY
MALONEY AT HARTFORD PUBLIC, PPD. TO THURSDAY
BLOOMFIELD AT LEWIS MILLS, PPD. TO JAN. 17
PLATT AT SOUTH WINDSOR, PPD., TBA
MANCHESTER AT GLASTONBURY, PPD., TBA
NCCC
ROCKVILLE AT EAST GRANBY, PPD. TO TODAY
SMSA AT COVENTRY, PPD. TO TODAY
SOMERS AT CANTON, PPD. TO FEB. 7
STAFFORD AT WINDSOR LOCKS, PPD., TBA
SUFFIELD AT BOLTON, PPD., TBA
Shoreline
HADDAM-KILLINGWORTH AT MORGAN, PPD. TO TODAY
WESTBROOK AT COGINCHAUG, PPD. TO TODAY
PORTLAND AT HALE-RAY, PPD. TO TODAY
OLD LYME AT OLD SAYBROOK, PPD. TO JAN. 26
VALLEY REGIONAL AT CROMWELL, PPD., TBA
CTC
CHENEY TECH AT VINAL TECH, PPD. TO MONDAY
WILCOX TECH AT O'BRIEN TECH, PPD. TO FEB. 4
GOODWIN TECH AT PRINCE TECH, PPD., TBA
CRAL
UNIVERSITY AT MLC, PPD. TO TODAY
CIVIC LEADERSHIP AT PARISH HILL, PPD. TO JAN. 21
SCC
HAND 74, LYMAN HALL 44
CHESHIRE AT AMITY, PPD. TO THURSDAY
ECC
PLAINFIELD AT WINDHAM, PPD., TBA

GIRLS BASKETBALL

CCC-Inter
TOLLAND AT SIMSBURY, PPD. TO TODAY
HARTFORD PUBLIC AT BRISTOL CENTRAL, PPD., TBA
LEWIS MILLS AT NEW BRITAIN, PPD., TBA
NCCC
EAST GRANBY AT ROCKVILLE, PPD. TO TODAY
WINDSOR LOCKS AT STAFFORD, PPD. TO TODAY
COVENTRY AT SMSA, PPD., TBA
BOLTON AT SUFFIELD, PPD., TBA
Shoreline
COGINCHAUG AT WESTBROOK, PPD. TO TODAY
CROMWELL AT VALLEY REGIONAL, PPD. TO TODAY
OLD LYME AT OLD SAYBROOK, PPD. TO JAN. 22
HALE-RAY AT PORTLAND, PPD., TBA
CTC
VINAL TECH AT CHENEY TECH, PPD. TO WEDNESDAY
PRINCE TECH AT GOODWIN TECH, PPD., TBA
CRAL
CIVIC LEADERSHIP AT INNOVATION, PPD. TO JAN. 22
SCC
HAND 57, MERCY 36
HAND (4-1): Brooke Salutari 3-3-10, Sophia Coppola 4-6-15, Maya Blomberg 2-0-5, Natalie Lucas 3-3-10, Coco Rourke 4-1-9, Aubrey Canth 2-0-4, Annie Goodrich 1-2-4. Totals 19-15-57.
MERCY (2-2): Sophie Hedge 4-0-9, Kate Donlan 1-0-3, Ava Giansiracusa 3-5-11, Melina Ford 1-0-2, Winnie Ciccarello 2-0-6, Caelyn McMahon-Egan 0-1-1, Bella Gonzalez 1-0-2, Mercedes Artaiz 1-0-2. Totals 13-6-36.

H;	22;	11;	12;	12;	—; 57
M;	3;	12;	9;	12;	—; 36

HAMDEN AT SHEEHAN, PPD. TO JAN. 22
SHELTON AT LYMAN HALL, PPD., TBA
Others
GREENWICH AT UNIVERSITY, PPD., TBA

BOYS HOCKEY

Others
ENFIELD CO-OP AT TRI-TOWN, CANCELED

GIRLS HOCKEY

CCC
AVON CO-OP AT SUFFIELD CO-OP, PPD., TBA
Others
MASUK CO-OP AT EAST CATHOLIC CO-OP, PPD. TO SUNDAY

BOYS SWIMMING

SCC
SHEEHAN, SHELTON AT XAVIER, PPD., TBA

SATURDAY'S HIGH SCHOOL SCHEDULE

BOYS BASKETBALL

CCC-**East:** Manchester at East Catholic, 12:30p.m.
CCC-**West:** Glastonbury at Farmington, 4p.m.
CCC-**Inter:** Southington at Enfield, noon; Bulkeley at E.O. Smith 3:30p.m.
NCCC: SMSA at Coventry, 10a.m.; Rockville at East Granby, 6:30p.m.
Shoreline: Westbrook at Coginchaug, 3:30p.m.; Portland at Hale-Ray, 4p.m.; Haddam-Killingworth at Morgan, 7p.m.
CRAL: University at MLC, 1:30p.m.
ECC: Ledyard at Bacon Academy, 5:30 p.m.
Others
Cheney Tech at RHAM, 1p.m.; Weaver at New Britain, 2p.m.; HMTCA at Foran, 3p.m.; Newington at Holy Cross, 6p.m.; Hall at New London, 7:30p.m.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

CCC-**West:** Farmington at Glastonbury, noon
CCC-**Inter:** Tolland at SImsbury, 2p.m.
NCCC: East Granby at Rockville, 6p.m.
Shoreline: Coginchaug at Westbrook, 3p.m.; Cromwell at Valley Regional, 3 p.m.
Others: Berlin at Killingly, 4p.m.; Newington at Trumbull, 6:30p.m.

BOYS HOCKEY

CCC-**North:** Farmington Valley at Northwest Catholic, 6:20p.m.
CCC-**South:** Hall at Rocky Hill co-op, 7 p.m.; E.O. Smith/Tolland at Newington co-op, 8p.m.
CCC-**Inter:** Wethersfield at East Catholic, 4:50p.m.; Conard at Northeastern, 6p.m.
NHC: Eastern CT at SGWL, 5:50p.m.
SCC/**SWC:** Cheshire at Amity, 3p.m.; Sheehan at Lyman Hall, 7:30p.m.
Others: Xavier at Barrington (R.I.), 6 p.m.; East Haven co-op at Glastonbury, 7:30p.m.

GIRLS HOCKEY

Others: Hamden co-op at Northwest Catholic co-op, noon; West Haven/SHA at Simsbury, 12:30p.m.; Hand co-op at Conard/Hall, 1:30p.m.; Amity co-op at Suffield co-op, 8p.m.

WRESTLING

Others: Bunnell, Norwalk, Staples, Westhill at Simsbury, 8:15a.m.; Southington Duals, 9a.m.; RHAM, Suffield/Windsor Locks, Shepherd Hill Regional (Mass.) at Ellis Tech, 9a.m.; Newington, Bethel, New Haven at Amity, 9:30a.m.; Middletown, Ledyard, Trumbull at Guilford, 10a.m.; Danbury at Xavier, noon

TRACK AND FIELD

Others: Hartford Public Developmental Meet No. 2, 10a.m.; Elm City Relays (Floyd Little AC, New Haven), 10a.m.

BOYS SWIMMING

CCC-**Inter:** South Windsor at Avon, 2:30p.m.

GIRLS GYMNASTICS

CCC: Conard at South Windsor, 7p.m.
Others: H-K/Morgan/Westbrook, Mercy at Foran, 10a.m.; Ellington at NFA, 4p.m.

THURSDAY'S LATE COLLEGE RESULT

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

MONMOUTH 70, QUINNIPIAC 60

FRIDAY'S COLLEGE RESULTS

MEN'S BASKETBALL

WESLEYAN AT TUFTS, PPD.
MARIST AT FAIRFIELD, LATE

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

TRINITY AT BOWDOIN, LATE
TUFTS AT WESLEYAN, LATE
MEN'S HOCKEY
YALE AT PRINCETON, PPD.
MIDDLEBURY AT TRINITY, LATE
SACRED HEART AT NIAGARA, LATE
WOMEN'S HOCKEY
UCONN AT VERMONT, LATE
TRINITY AT WILLIAMS, LATE

SATURDAY'S COLLEGE SCHEDULE

MEN'S BASKETBALL

UConn at Seton Hall, noon
Merrimack at Central, 1p.m.
Castleton at Eastern, 2p.m.
Regis at St. Joseph, 3p.m.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Rivier at St. Joseph, 1p.m.
Central at Merrimack, 2p.m.
Quinnipiac at Siena, 2p.m.
Wagner at Sacred Heart, 2p.m.
Trinity at Colby, 3p.m.
Harvard at Yale, 4p.m.
Fairfield at Rider, 7p.m.
MEN'S HOCKEY
UConn at Boston College, 4p.m.
Williams at Trinity, 4p.m.
Middlebury at Wesleyan, 4p.m.
Sacred Heart at Niagara, 5p.m.
WOMEN'S HOCKEY
Trinity at Williams, 3p.m.
Clarkson at Quinnipiac, 3p.m.
UConn at Vermont, 6p.m.
Big East basketball standings
MEN'S

Team; CONF; CPCT; OVR; PCT
Creighton; 2-0; 1.000; 10-3; .769
Providence; 3-1; .750; 13-2; .867
Villanova; 2-1; .667; 9-4; .692
Xavier; 1-1; .500; 11-2; .846
UConn; 1-1; .500; 10-3; .769
Butler; 1-1; .500; 8-5; .615
Seton Hall; 1-2; .333; 10-3; .769
Marquette; 1-3; .250; 9-6; .600
St. John's; 0-0; .000; 8-3; .727
Georgetown; 0-0; .000; 6-5; .545
DePaul; 0-2; .000; 9-3; .750

FRIDAY'S RESULTS

MARQUETTE AT GEORGETOWN, LATE
XAVIER AT BUTLER, LATE

SATURDAY'S SCHEDULE

UConn at Seton Hall, noon
St. John's at Providence, noon
Villanova at DePaul, 2p.m.
WOMEN'S

Team; CONF; CPCT; OVR; PCT
Creighton; 4-0; 1.000; 9-3; .750
DePaul; 3-0; 1.000; 11-3; .786
UConn; 1-0; 1.000; 6-3; .667
Marquette; 2-1; .667; 9-3; .750
Villanova; 2-2; .500; 8-5; .615
Georgetown; 1-1; .500; 6-4; .600
Providence; 1-2; .333; 6-6; .500
St. John's; 1-2; .333; 5-8; .385
Seton Hall; 1-3; .250; 6-6; .500
Xavier; 1-3; .250; 6-7; .462
Butler; 0-3; .000; 1-11; .083

FRIDAY'S RESULTS

UCONN AT VILLANOVA, PPD.
BUTLER AT SETON HALL, PPD.
XAVIER AT ST. JOHN'S, CANCELED
DEPAUL AT PROVIDENCE, LATE
MARQUETTE AT CREIGHTON, LATE

SUNDAY'S SCHEDULE

Creighton at UConn, 1p.m.
Villanova at Georgetown, 2p.m.
AHL Standings

Atlantic; GP; W; L; OTL; SOL; PTS; PCT
Springfield; 28; 17; 8; 2; 1; 37; .661
Hartford; 26; 14; 8; 2; 2; 32; .615
Hershey; 27; 15; 9; 2; 1; 33; .611
Providence; 25; 13; 8; 3; 1; 30; .600
Charlotte; 27; 14; 11; 2; 0; 30; .556
Lehigh Valley; 26; 9; 11; 4; 2; 24; .462
W-B/Scranton; 24; 9; 12; 1; 2; 21; .438
Bridgeport; 32; 10; 16; 3; 3; 26; .406
North; GP; W; L; OTL; SOL; PTS; PCT
Utica; 22; 18; 1; 3; 0; 39; .886
Rochester; 26; 17; 9; 0; 0; 34; .654
Laval; 24; 12; 10; 2; 0; 26; .542
Toronto; 24; 12; 10; 1; 1; 26; .542
Cleveland; 24; 10; 8; 3; 3; 26; .542
Belleville; 25; 12; 13; 0; 0; 24; .480
Syracuse; 21; 8; 10; 2; 1; 19; .452
Central; GP; W; L; OTL; SOL; PTS; PCT
Chicago; 26; 20; 4; 1; 1; 42; .808
Manitoba; 26; 16; 9; 1; 0; 33; .635
Grand Rapids; 25; 11; 10; 3; 1; 26; .520
Iowa; 26; 11; 11; 2; 2; 26; .500
Rockford; 24; 11; 11; 1; 1; 24; .500
Milwaukee; 29; 12; 15; 2; 0; 26; .448
Texas; 23; 8; 11; 3; 1; 20; .435
Pacific; GP; W; L; OTL; SOL; PTS; PCT
Stockton; 25; 19; 3; 2; 1; 41; .820
Ontario; 24; 15; 6; 2; 1; 33; .688
Henderson; 24; 14; 7; 2;

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Crispy shrimp cakes with chile-lime mayo. For an untraditional binder, crushed-up rice cakes are mixed in with the shrimp for a crisp result. DAVID MALOSH/ THE NEW YORK TIMES

Lightest, crispiest SHRIMP CAKES

By Melissa Clark
The New York Times

Whether bite-size Thai shrimp patties spiked with fish sauce, Vietnamese shrimp paste packed onto sugar cane or Southern American shrimp burgers shot through with mayonnaise, savory shrimp cakes are a tasty staple in coastal regions all over the world.

Unsurprisingly, their flavors vary depending on where they're made. You'll find them spiced with the likes of white pepper in China, chiles in Latin America or Old Bay seasoning in South Carolina.

Another point of difference is the binder — or lack thereof. Some traditional recipes skip it, mashing and pounding the shrimp until they stick together on their own. This results in a firm, bouncy texture after cooking, with a pleasing chew. Other recipes lace some combination of eggs, flour, cornstarch, bread or cracker crumbs, or rice into the shrimp batter, making for airier, crumblier cakes that are easier to brown when cooked at high heat (usually deep-fried, pan-fried or grilled).

In my somewhat untraditional rendition, I've bound the batter with something else entirely: crumbs pulverized from puffed, crunchy rice cakes.

Although this may not seem intuitive, it does make sense, given that both rice and crackers are common binders. Rice cakes just combine the two. You get the mild flavor and gluten-free qualities of the rice along with the crispness of crackers.

Make sure to use the pebbly kind of rice cakes here (either thick or thin), the ones that vaguely resemble popcorn or plastic foam. While you could crush up smooth, waferlike rice crackers for this, the shrimp cakes won't be quite as airy. The beauty of the rice cakes is how all that air trapped in the puffed rice gives the shrimp cakes a lighter, more ethereal texture.

To make the crumbs, grind the rice cakes in a food processor or blender. Then the shrimp and aromatics (I use a bracing mix of garlic, basil, cilantro and chiles) can be whirled together in the same container, no need to wash it first.

Chilling the batter for at least an hour (or overnight) makes it easier to form into cakes. And the fried cakes freeze reasonably well, although they won't be as crisp after thawing. Running them under the broiler helps restore them.

I like to serve these with an herby, chile-flecked mayonnaise that's sort of like a tartar sauce, but spicier. Then I nibble them hot from the pan and dream of the beach.

Crispy shrimp cakes with chile-lime mayo

Total time: 45 minutes
Makes: 3 to 4 servings
3 to 5 large original or lightly salted rice cakes, or 6 to 10 thin cakes (see note)
1 pound shelled large raw shrimp (20 to 24), coarsely chopped
¼ cup minced shallot (or use onion or scallion)
6 tablespoons chopped cilantro
6 tablespoons chopped basil leaves, more for serving
3 tablespoons minced jalapeño or red chile pepper
2 ½ teaspoons fish sauce
Fine sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
½ cup mayonnaise
1 lime
Safflower, peanut or grapeseed oil, for frying

1. In the bowl of the food processor (or you can use a blender), add the rice cakes and pulse until you get 1 ¼ cups rice cake crumbs. Return ¼ cup crumbs to the food processor, reserving the remaining 1 cup for coating the cakes.

2. Add shrimp, shallot, 4 tablespoons each of cilantro and basil, and 2 tablespoons jalapeño to crumbs. Add 2 teaspoons fish sauce and a pinch each salt and pepper. Pulse until the mixture forms a coarse, chunky paste. (Be careful not to overprocess; if using a blender, scrape down the sides frequently.) Transfer to a bowl, cover and refrigerate while you make the sauce (at least 15 minutes and up to 24 hours).

3. In small bowl, whisk together mayonnaise, remaining cilantro, basil, jalapeño and fish sauce. Zest lime into bowl, then cut naked lime into wedges and squeeze in some juice. Salt to taste. Reserve extra lime wedges for serving.

4. Spread remaining 1 cup rice cake crumbs out onto plate or sheet pan. With wet hands to keep shrimp paste from sticking, form 2 tablespoons of shrimp mixture into ½-inch-thick patty and put it on top of crumbs. Repeat with remaining shrimp mixture, re-wetting hands as needed. Turn patties over in crumbs to coat both sides.

5. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Fry patties in batches until golden brown, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Serve shrimp cakes topped with more basil leaves, with chile-lime sauce for dunking and lime wedges on the side for squeezing.

Note: Original, whole-grain or brown rice cakes (either the thick or thin kind) all work well. If you can't find rice cakes, use 1 ¼ cups panko or cracker crumbs. The cakes won't be as crisp, but they'll still taste great.



A pan of hearty lasagna Bolognese from Anthony Bourdain's "Appetites: A Cookbook." KIRK MCKOY/LOS ANGELES TIMES

A COMPLETE MEAL IN ITSELF

A pan of lasagna will please everyone at your dinner table

By Julie Giuffrida
Los Angeles Times

Lasagna is one of those dishes best eaten a day or more after it is made, so the flavors have a chance to marry and the components can bond more firmly. That can be quite helpful at this time of year, when we are perhaps a bit burned out from all of that holiday cooking.

A complete meal in itself, no sides are necessary with lasagna, though a green salad can add a welcome crunch factor. Lasagna is easily adaptable for vegetarians and can be made with gluten-free lasagna noodles for those who do not eat wheat. Want to cut down on dishes, too? No-boil lasagna noodles reduce preparation time and pot washing.

Classic lasagna Bolognese uses a ragu — slow-cooked meat sauce — rather than ground beef simmered in marinara, and a bechamel in place of the layers of ricotta and mozzarella that we are accustomed to here in America. Although you can't taste it, Anthony Bourdain's ragu includes chicken liver for even more richness and depth of flavor. His lasagna Bolognese also uses no-boil lasagna noodles for easier assembly.

Lorenza Munoz makes a vegetarian Mexican lasagna using popular Mexican ingredients such as rajas — strips of poblano chile sauteed with onions — in place of the meat and her own blend of sour cream and cotija cheese to make "Mexican ricotta."

Packed with fresh spinach, portobello mushrooms, artichokes and gooey mozzarella, Cafe Roka's artichoke and portobello mushroom lasagna is all about a hearty texture.

Most people wouldn't guess it is vegetarian.

Spend a few hours making it — or any of these delicious lasagna recipes — and you'll have many meals' worth of heat-and-eat dinners on hand.



GLENN KOENIG/LOS ANGELES TIMES

Cafe Roka's artichoke and portobello mushroom lasagna

Time: 2 hours
Makes: 10 to 12 servings
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion, medium dice
1 pound portobello mushrooms, medium dice
1 pound coarsely chopped spinach
½ cup dry white wine
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 (14-ounce) can artichokes (packed in water), drained and coarsely chopped
Salt and pepper
¼ cup (½ stick) butter
¼ cup flour
4 ½ cups milk
1 ½ cups grated Parmesan cheese
1 (14-ounce) can diced tomatoes, drained
Ground nutmeg
1 (9-ounce) box oven-ready lasagna sheets (no-boil style)
1 pound grated whole milk mozzarella

1. Bring a large pot of water to boil to blanch the spinach.

2. Meanwhile, heat a large skillet over medium-high heat until hot, then add the olive oil and the onion. Cook the onion, stirring frequently, until the onion starts to soften, 3 to 5 minutes. Increase the heat to high, stir in the mushrooms and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until any of the liquid released from the mushrooms has evaporated, 8 to 10 minutes.

3. While the mushrooms are cooking, blanch the spinach: Add the spinach, in batches, to the boiling water and cook until the spinach softens and turns a bright green, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Transfer the spinach in a large bowl of ice water to stop the cooking. Repeat until all the spinach is blanched. Drain the spinach and wrap it in a large kitchen towel, squeezing the towel to drain the spinach of any excess moisture.

4. When the liquid from the mushrooms has evaporated, add the white wine, stirring to scrape any flavoring from the bottom of the pan. Add the garlic and artichokes, stirring until completely combined. Taste the mixture, and add ¾ teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper, or season as desired. Stir in the spinach, then taste and season again if needed. Remove from heat and set aside.

5. Make the tomato-bechamel sauce: In a medium, heavy-bottom saucepan, melt butter over medium-high heat. When butter is foamy, whisk in flour. Slowly whisk in the milk and cook over medium heat, whisking frequently, until the mixture begins to thicken and take on a sauce-like consistency, 10 to 12 minutes. Slowly stir in the Parmesan cheese, and when the cheese is melted, stir in the tomatoes. Taste the sauce, adding ¾ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper, along with a pinch of nutmeg, or season as desired.

6. Heat the oven to 350 degrees and assemble the lasagna: On the bottom of a 13-by 9-inch baking dish, ladle about 1 cup of the tomato-bechamel sauce. Cover the sauce with a single layer of lasagna noodles. Sprinkle ¼ of the vegetable mixture over the noodles, then ladle over another cup of the sauce. Top the sauce with ¼ of the grated mozzarella. Repeat with the noodles, vegetables, sauce and mozzarella until you have 4 layers. (If you have more than one cup of sauce left when assembling the fourth layer, go ahead and pour all the remaining sauce with that layer before sprinkling over the last of the mozzarella cheese.) The dish can be assembled up to this point, covered with plastic wrap and refrigerated up to a day before baking; remove the plastic wrap and leave the lasagna out at room temperature while heating the oven before continuing with the next step.

7. Cover baking dish with foil and place dish on rimmed baking sheet to catch any drippings. Bake the lasagna for 45 minutes. Increase the temperature to 450 degrees, remove the foil from the lasagna and continue baking until the top is lightly browned, 8 to 12 minutes. Remove and cool slightly on a rack for 20 minutes before serving.

— By Noelle Carter; adapted from Cafe Roka in Bisbee, Arizona

Anthony Bourdain's lasagna Bolognese

Time: 4 hours
Makes: 12 to 16 servings

Bechamel sauce
6 tablespoons butter
6 tablespoons flour
1 quart milk
Salt and pepper
Pinch freshly ground nutmeg, optional

1. In a medium, heavy-bottom saucepan, heat the butter over medium heat until it foams and subsides. Whisk in the flour and stir it well using a wooden spoon, incorporating it into the butter until a dry paste forms (a roux). Reduce the heat and continue to cook and stir, taking care not to let the mixture brown.

2. Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, bring the milk to a simmer, then gradually whisk it into the pan with the roux, continuing to whisk until the mixture is smooth. Season with ½ teaspoon salt and a pinch of pepper, or to taste, along with the nutmeg, if using. Continue to cook over medium-low heat, stirring regularly, until the sauce is thick enough to coat the back of a wooden spoon, about 10 minutes. This makes about 4 cups bechamel.

Lasagna Bolognese
3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
1 large white or yellow onion, finely chopped
2 large or 3 medium carrots, finely chopped
3 ribs celery, finely chopped
4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
½ teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
½ pound chicken livers, trimmed of connective tissue and fat and finely chopped
¾ pound ground beef chuck
¾ pound ground veal
¾ pound ground pork
¾ cup tomato paste (about 6 ounces)
1 cup Vermentino, Trebbiano or other Tuscan white wine
1 ½ cups milk
2 bay leaves
About 1 pound dry, flat lasagna noodles
4 cups bechamel sauce
¾ cup finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
6 ounces fresh mozzarella cheese, thinly sliced

1. To make the Bolognese sauce, in a medium, heavy-bottom pot, heat 2 tablespoons oil over medium-high heat. Add the onion, carrots, celery, garlic and thyme and season with ½ teaspoon salt and several grinds of pepper, or to taste. Cook, stirring regularly using a wooden spoon, until the vegetables are tender and have released their juices, 7 to 9 minutes. Stir in the livers and cook over high heat for 2 minutes, then add the beef, veal and pork, stirring and breaking up over high heat. Season with 1 teaspoon salt and several grinds pepper, or to taste. Continue to cook over high heat until the meat is brown, stirring regularly and scraping the bottom of the pan as necessary to keep the meat and vegetables from scorching.

2. Once the meat is browned, stir in the tomato paste over medium heat. Cook for about 20 minutes, stirring regularly, to marry the flavors. Add the wine, bring to a boil and cook until the wine is reduced by half, then add the milk and bay leaves and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook for 1 ½ to 2 hours, stirring occasionally. You may need to add a bit of water (or chicken or veal stock, if you have it) to thin the sauce if it thickens too much.

3. Taste the sauce and season with 1 teaspoon salt and several grinds of pepper, or as needed. Remove from heat and stir to release the steam and allow it to cool slightly. Skim the fat off the top with a ladle and discard.

4. Heat the oven to 350 degrees.

5. Coat the inside of a 13-inch by 9-inch (or similar size) baking dish with the remaining tablespoon oil. Cover the bottom of the dish with a layer of bechamel. Sprinkle over some grated cheese, then top with a layer of noodles. Top the noodles with a layer of Bolognese sauce, and repeat with the bechamel, grated cheese, noodles and Bolognese until the pan is filled to the top. The top layer should be Bolognese, dotted with bechamel, with thin slices of mozzarella laid across the top.

6. Place the baking dish on a foil-lined sheet pan and bake in the oven until the lasagna is browned on top and beginning to bubble, about 50 minutes. Remove and set aside to cool. If you must serve it the day you've made it, set it aside to rest for 15 minutes before slicing. For best results, allow the lasagna to cool completely and refrigerate overnight. The next day, reheat at 350 degrees, covered loosely with foil, until bubbling. Remove from heat and rest 20 minutes before serving.

— Adapted from a recipe in "Appetites: A Cookbook" by Anthony Bourdain

Mexican lasagna

Time: 1 hour 20 minutes
Makes: 8 to 12 servings
8 poblano chiles
3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
½ onion, cut into rounds
1 cup corn kernels
1 chopped garlic clove
1 cup tomato sauce
1 cup vegetable broth
1 (8-ounce) container sour cream
15 ounces (1 ½ 10-ounce packages) cotija cheese, divided
9 pieces oven-ready lasagna
6 ounces quesadilla cheese (½ of a 12-ounce package), shredded

1. Prepare the chiles: Roast the chiles under the broiler or over a stove-top burner until the skin is charred on all sides. Peel the skin and seed the chiles, then cut lengthwise into long strips.

2. Heat the oven to 375 degrees.

3. In a large saute pan, heat 2 tablespoons oil over medium-high heat. Add the onions and cook, stirring frequently, until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in the corn and chile strips, reduce the heat to low and continue to cook until the corn and chiles are warmed through. Remove from heat and set aside.

4. In a medium saucepan, heat the remaining tablespoon of oil over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and cook until aromatic, about 1 minute. Add the tomato sauce and vegetable broth and heat until hot. Remove from heat and set aside.



RICARDO DEARATANHA/LOS ANGELES TIMES

5. In a food processor, combine the sour cream with ⅔ of the cotija cheese and blend until creamy but lumpy. (This can also be done by hand in a large bowl using the back of a spoon.)

6. Line base of 13-by-9-inch baking or casserole dish with 3 lasagna noodles. Add ½ of corn-chile mixture, distributing evenly over the noodles. Dollop ½ of the sour cream-cotija mixture over the corn and chiles. Place 3 more noodles in the pan, and repeat with the remaining corn-chile mixture and sour cream-cotija mix.

7. Place the 3 remaining noodles in the pan. Sprinkle the shredded quesadilla cheese and remaining cotija cheese over the noodles. Using a spoon, drizzle the thinned tomato sauce evenly over the noodles in the dish.

8. Cover the dish with foil and bake the lasagna for 30 minutes. Remove the foil and continue to bake until the cheese is melted and golden, an additional 10 to 15 minutes.

— By Lorenza Munoz



Fresh and dried cranberries dot this delicious cornbread. **ERICA ALLEN/EATINGWELL**

Sweeten your cornbread

By Maria Speck | EatingWell

Cornbread gets a makeover with the addition of fresh and dried cranberries. If you like your cornbread on the sweeter side, increase the recipe's honey to ½ cup.

Cranberry cornbread

Makes: 10 servings
Active time: 15 minutes
Total time: 45 minutes
2 cups fine whole-grain cornmeal
¾ cup whole-wheat pastry flour or white whole-wheat flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
¼ teaspoon salt
2 large eggs
1 ½cups buttermilk
⅓ cup extra-virgin olive oil
⅓ cup honey
1 tablespoon finely grated orange zest
¾ cup fresh cranberries, rinsed and patted dry, or frozen (not thawed)
⅓ cup dried cranberries
1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Coat a 10-inch cast-iron skillet (or 9-inch metal cake pan) with cooking spray.
2. Set aside 2 tablespoons cornmeal in a small bowl. Whisk the remaining cornmeal, whole-wheat flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a large bowl.
3. Lightly whisk eggs in a medium bowl, then whisk in buttermilk, oil, honey and orange zest until smooth. Make a well in the center of the dry mixture. Pour in the wet ingredients and stir with a rubber spatula until just combined. Do not overmix; the batter should look lumpy.
4. Toss fresh and dried cranberries with the reserved cornmeal. (This will prevent the fruit from sinking to the bottom during baking.) Gently fold the cranberries and cornmeal into the batter. Scrape the batter into the prepared skillet (or pan).
5. Bake the cornbread until the edges turn golden brown and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out with a few moist crumbs, 25 to 30 minutes. Let stand for 15 minutes before cutting into wedges. Serve warm.
Notes: White whole-wheat flour is made from hard white wheat berries, which makes it lighter in color and flavor than regular whole-wheat flour, but with the same nutritional properties. For the best flavor, store it airtight in the freezer. Whole-grain cornmeal (with the nutritious germ and fiber-rich bran left intact) is increasingly available in well-stocked supermarkets. Look for "whole grain" on the label. For this recipe, use "fine" whole-grain cornmeal.

Warm up with a bowl of broccoli and potato soup

By Melissa Clark | The New York Times

In this warming recipe, the broccoli florets are seared until deeply browned on one side and bright green on the other. This gives the soup a layer of caramelized flavor while also preserving the fresh green taste of the broccoli.



ANDREW SCRIVANI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Seared broccoli and potato soup

Makes: 4 to 6 servings
Time: 45 minutes
½ cup olive oil, plus more as needed
2 broccoli heads (about 2 pounds), separated into small florets, stems peeled and diced
2 ½ teaspoons kosher salt, plus more to taste
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 large Spanish onion, diced
5 garlic cloves, chopped
½ teaspoon black pepper, plus more for finishing
¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
½ pound potatoes, peeled and sliced
¼ teaspoon finely grated lemon zest
1 ½ tablespoons fresh lemon juice, plus more to taste
Grated Parmesan, for finishing
Flaky sea salt, for finishing
1. In large pot, heat 2 tablespoons of oil over high heat. Add about a third of broccoli, enough so that it covers bottom of pan in a single layer without crowding. Cook broccoli without moving it for about 3 to 4 minutes, or until dark brown on one side only (leave the other side bright green). Transfer to a big bowl and repeat with remaining broccoli and more oil. (You should have just 2 tablespoons of oil left.) When all the broccoli has been browned, season with 1 teaspoon salt and set aside.
2. Reduce heat to medium-low. Add butter and remaining 2 tablespoons of oil. Add onions and garlic, black and red pepper, and ½ teaspoon kosher salt. Cook onion-garlic mixture until soft and translucent, 4 minutes. Add potato to pot with 1 quart water and 1 teaspoon salt. Bring to a simmer, cover pot and cook until potato is just tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Add broccoli, cover again and cook until tender, another 5 to 10 minutes.
3. Add lemon zest and roughly purée soup with an immersion or regular blender, leaving some small chunks for texture. Stir in lemon juice. Finish with grated Parmesan, a drizzle of olive oil, black pepper and flaky sea salt.



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Mark Bittman's take on Ma Po, a Sichuan dish featuring tofu in a spicy sauce, is made with ground chicken, green beans and Sichuan peppercorns for heat.
GRETCHEN MCKAY/PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

Ma Po reinvented with chicken and green beans

By Gretchen Mckay
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Perhaps no Sichuan dish is as famous as rich, spicy-hot Ma Po, made with tofu and minced ground pork. Loved for its aromatic heat, it's perfect for those brisk winter days where the cold seeps into your bones and even your coziest sweater can't warm you up.

The spice that gives Ma Po its kick isn't the expected chili pepper but Sichuan peppercorn. Fragrant, with a hint of citrus, the reddish-pink berries of the prickly ash tree numb the lips upon impact.

In this recipe from Mark Bittman, ground chicken and green beans trade places with the traditional pork and tofu, and the silky sauce is made not with fermented bean paste and hot chilies but from the pantry staples of ketchup, cider vinegar and cornstarch. He also adds ground Sichuan peppercorn instead of the whole petite berries. You can find either at most Asian markets.

What the dish lacks in authenticity, he writes in "Dinner for Everyone," "is more than compensated by its familiar flavor and convenience."

I used lettuce cups, but you could serve it with rice or noodles for a more substantial bite. Or, just spoon it into a bowl right out of the pan. Also on the nontraditional side: I added chopped pistachio for crunch and lots of fresh chopped cilantro.

Almost Ma Po chicken

Makes: 6 servings
3 tablespoons good vegetable oil (I used sesame)
1 ½ pounds ground chicken
Salt and pepper
1 15-ounce can black beans, drained and rinsed
2 tablespoons ketchup
2 tablespoons cider vinegar
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 teaspoon dark sesame oil
1 teaspoon red chili flakes, or to taste
1 teaspoon ground Sichuan peppercorn
1 pound green beans, trimmed
Butterhead, green leaf or romaine lettuce, washed, dried and separated into leaves
Chopped fresh cilantro, for garnish
Chopped pistachios, for garnish

1. Heat oil in a large skillet on medium-high. Add chicken, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring occasionally, until it's browned and crisp in places, 5-10 minutes.

2. While chicken cooks, mash black beans with a fork in a small bowl. Add ketchup, vinegar, cornstarch, sesame oil, chili flakes and Sichuan peppercorn. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Stir and mash until a thick paste forms.

3. Add the mixture to the browned chicken, stirring until coated and fragrant, 1-2 minutes. Add ½ cup water and green beans and stir. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat so the mixture bubbles steadily and cover.

4. Cook, stirring once or twice, until the sauce thickens and the beans are as tender as you like, 5-10 minutes. Taste and adjust seasonings.

5. To serve, spoon chicken mixture into lettuce leaves. Top with chopped cilantro and chopped pistachio.

— Adapted from "Dinner for Everyone" by Mark Bittman (Clarkson Potter, $40)



You can make this seemingly fancy dessert up to two days ahead of time.
ELLE SIMONE/AMERICA'S TEST KITCHEN

With this recipe, everyone gets their own mini cake

America's Test Kitchen

Flourless chocolate cakes are rich, fudgy and intensely chocolaty. Instead of using flour or leaveners for structure, like most other cakes do, these special cakes rely on a combination of eggs and cornstarch. As the cakes bake, the eggs puff up in the oven, giving them lift. The cornstarch creates a kind of glue to keep the texture smooth. Bonus: These cakes are naturally gluten-free.

Individual flourless chocolate cakes

Makes: 6 individual cakes
Vegetable oil spray
1 cup (6 ounces) chocolate chips
8 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 4 pieces
½ cup (3 ½ ounces) sugar
1 ½ teaspoons cornstarch
3 large eggs
¼ cup (2 ounces) water
1 ½ teaspoons vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon salt

1. Adjust oven rack to the middle position and heat oven to 275 degrees. Spray the inside bottoms and sides of six 4-ounce ramekins with vegetable oil spray. Place ramekins on a rimmed baking sheet.

2. In a large microwave-safe bowl, combine chocolate chips and butter. Heat in the microwave at 50% power for 2 minutes. Stir mixture with a rubber spatula to combine. Return to the microwave and heat at 50% power until melted, about 2 minutes.

3. Use the rubber spatula to stir until well combined and shiny, about 30 seconds. Let chocolate mixture cool for 5 minutes.

4. In a medium bowl, whisk sugar and cornstarch until combined. Add eggs, water, vanilla and salt; whisk until combined.

5. Add sugar mixture to cooled chocolate mixture and whisk until smooth. Transfer batter to a large liquid measuring cup. Pour batter evenly into greased ramekins. (Ramekins will be about ¾ of the way full.)

6. Bake cakes until edges are set, but centers still look wet, 20 to 24 minutes. Gently shake the baking sheet. If the centers of the cakes look very liquidy and jiggle a lot, bake the cakes for 1 to 2 additional minutes. When the centers of the cakes jiggle slightly, remove the baking sheet from the oven. Place the baking sheet on a cooling rack and let cakes cool on baking sheet for 30 minutes.

7. Cover each ramekin with plastic wrap and use a fork to poke small holes in top of plastic. Refrigerate until cakes are cold and firm, at least 1 ½ hours. (Cakes can be refrigerated for up to two days.)

8. Remove cakes from the refrigerator and let them sit at room temperature for 30 minutes before serving. Top with whipped cream or berries, or dust with confectioners' sugar, if desired. Serve.

SERIOUSLY SIMPLE

You'll love this heavenly bite of cheesy corn crispness

By Diane Rossen Worthington
Tribune Content Agency

Looking for an easy appetizer? Claudia Roden shares these delicious bites in her latest cookbook, "Claudia Roden's Mediterranean: Treasured Recipes from a Lifetime of Travel."

Polenta was originally cooked and served as a porridge to feed poor northern Italian peasantry, and Roden reminds us that in the 1980s corn polenta was cut into triangles and grilled to become a creamy, crusty base for elegant food artfully graced on top. With this recipe, the author has given this classic peasant dish a fresh look as a bite of polenta-cheese perfection to accompany cocktails or sparkling wine.

I love the flavor combination of Parmesan and taleggio along with fresh rosemary. Remember, you can make the polenta the day before, then cut it into cubes and roast them just before serving. You can also cut these into larger shapes to accompany any main course like sausages, chicken or beef.

I'm planning on serving these bites for a New Year's Eve party and saving any remaining for the next day. They would also be a good appetizer watching any TV sporting event.



You can make the polenta the day before, then cut it into cubes and roast them just before serving. SUSAN BELL/TNS

Roasted cheese polenta cubes

Makes: about 32 cubes
Olive oil or sunflower oil for brushing, plus ¼ cup
4 cups water
2 teaspoons salt
1 ¾ cups instant polenta
¾ cup freshly grated Parmesan or Grana Padano cheese
1 cup diced semisoft cheese such as fontina or taleggio
1 tablespoon chopped rosemary leaves
Black pepper

1. Line an 8-inch-by-12-inch baking pan with foil; if you have a larger pan, line it with foil that you can fold up to contain the polenta in a layer about 1 inch thick. Brush with oil.

2. Bring the water and salt to a boil in a very large saucepan. Pour in the polenta, whisking vigorously. When it comes back to a boil, lower the heat and continue to stir with the whisk for 3 minutes, making sure that no lumps form. It will gurgle and splatter, so you might need to put a cloth around your hand.

3. Add both cheeses, the rosemary and some pepper, and whisk well to make sure the cheese melts evenly. Cover the pan and cook over very low heat for 8 minutes, stirring occasionally.

4. Pour the polenta into the prepared pan, let it cool, then cover and refrigerate for 2 hours. Half an hour before serving, preheat the oven to 475 degrees.

5. Cut the polenta into cubes with a sharp knife. Pour the ¼ cup oil into another, larger, baking dish or roasting pan, and tip the polenta cubes into it, then turn them in the oil to coat on all sides. Roast for 20 to 25 minutes, until nicely crisp and golden, turning them over once. Serve hot.

— Photography and recipe courtesy "Claudia Roden's Mediterranean: Treasured Recipes from a Lifetime of Travel." Ten Speed Books, 2021.